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VIEWS

OF

LOUISIANA;

CONTAINING

GEOGRAPHICAL, STATISTICAL

AND

HISTORICAL

NOTICES OF

THAT VAST AND IMPORTANT PORTION

OF

AMERICA.

By H. M. BRACKENRIDGE, ESQ.

BALTIMORE:

PRINTED BY SCHAEFFER & MAUND.

1817.

F353
.B78

District of Pennsylvania, to wit:

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the twenty-fourth day of November, in the thirty-eighth year of the Independence of the United States of America, A. D. 1813, HENRY M. BRACKENRIDGE, of the said District, hath deposited in this office the Title of a Book, the right whereof he claims as Author—in the words following, to wit:

"Views of Louisiana; with a Journal of a voyage up the Missouri. By H. M. Brackenridge, Esq.

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts and Books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned."—And also the Act entitled, "An Act supplementary to the Act entitled, "An act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts and Books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned," and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

D. CALDWELL,

Clerk of the District of Pennsylvania.

TO

HIS EXCELLENCY

THE CHEVALIER

JOSE CORREA, DE SERRA,

MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY

OF

H. M. F. Majesty,

THE KING OF PORTUGAL AND THE BRAZILS.

A PLAIN republican, to whom high names, official dignities, or vast riches, command no awe or veneration, but who willingly acknowledges as his superior, the man of mind, whatever may be his station, humbly DEDICATES, his performance, unworthy as it is, TO ONE OF THE MOST ENLIGHTENED FOREIGNERS THAT HAS EVER VISITED THE UNITED STATES.

The giddy world, too often assigns the highest places in the temple of fame, to mighty conquerors and warriors, who are more frequently the enemies, than the friends of mankind, while its real benefactors, are but slowly, are never fully appreciated. The few, on whom nature has bestowed the choice gift of a capacious mind, which they have stored with knowledge for the good of their fellow creatures, should ever be regarded as blessings to the people among whom they have been cast. They are to be received like the angel of Milton, who came down to instruct our first parents in wisdom and virtue.

As an American, I am proud that my country has been the choice of a sage, acknowledged both by Europe and America, as one of the most enlightened of human kind; who after having gathered from every field of science in the old world, has brought his ample store as a present to the new.

Sir, your amiable simplicity of manners, and communicative temper, restore to us our Franklin; in every part of our country, which you have visited

(for you have nearly seen it all) your society has been as acceptable to the unlettered farmer as to the learned philosopher: the liberal and friendly manner, in which you are accustomed to view every thing in these States, the partiality which you feel for their welfare, the profound maxims, upon every subject, which like the disciples of Socrates, we treasure up from your lips, entitle us to claim you as one of the fathers of our country.

To none, therefore, could I with more propriety dedicate my "*Views of Louisiana*," than to you whose favourite study is the American government, manners, and soil; and who (I say it without hesitation) have in the short space of five years, acquired a knowledge of this country, as critical and extensive, as any of its most intelligent citizens. But if any additional motive were necessary, to justify the liberty I have presumed to take in thus addressing you, I could allege a sense of gratitude, for the commendations you were pleased to bestow upon

this work, while yet in the shape of newspaper essays;

Pollio amat nostram, quamvis est rustica musam,

and it is in a great measure owing to those commendations, that it has assumed its present form.

Accept, sir, the expressions of the high veneration of one who esteems it as among the most felicitous circumstances of his life, to have personally known you, and to be able to subscribe himself,

Your sincere and
ardent admirer,
disciple, and friend,
H. M. BRACKENRIDGE.

TO THE READER.

IN the month of May 1810, I landed at New Madrid, on the Mississippi, and thence proceeded by land to St. Genevieve, with the intention of settling in some part of the country, in the practice of the law. After remaining some time, I conceived that Lower Louisiana, which was on its transit from territorial to state government, offered a better field for industry and enterprize; but, as the autumn is considered the best time for removing to the southern climate, and the winter was already advanced, I determined to employ my time in observing such things as appeared most worthy of attention. Pleased with this employment, I was drawn into a more extensive research than I had at first intended, and felt a degree of earnestness in studies, to which I had before been a stranger; my studies had been chiefly professional, or immediately connected with my profession. During the winter, a series of essays published by me, in Mr. Charless's paper at St. Louis, were re-printed in the newspapers of the states, and spoken of in terms of approbation. This was highly gratifying to my vanity. There is something exceedingly delightful to youth in this taste of fame; at a season, when the mind is filled with a thousand romantic conceits, and sees nothing but fairy prospects, this first manifestation of applause is often dangerous, and ought to be guarded against with care. With many it puts an end to all further effort, intoxicates the brain, paralyses the energies, and induces a belief that every thing has already been attained; with others, it serves to confirm in pursuits for which nature may never have intended them, and in consequence, we have bad painters, bad musicians, and bad authors. I have known a man entirely ruined, by having drawn a prize in a lottery, for he could never after reconcile himself to a sober industrious life. I have, therefore, been in some danger of becoming an author—probably an indifferent one. A professed author in this country, is indeed to be pitied; he is considered as a mere abstract man, of no importance or rank, civil, ecclesiastical or military, and necessarily takes up his

abode next door to starvation. The day, however, is not so distant as many imagine, when literary excellence will claim its honours even in this country. Many of my friends who read my essays in the newspapers, fancied that I had relinquished the profession of the law, and was wandering about, gathering geographical, or statistical matter, for the purpose of making more books. But I thank my stars, that I have had sufficient resolution to resist the temptation, to prove a recreant to the delightful pages of my Lord Coke, to the mellifluous sentences of Shepherd's Touchstone, to the erudite commentator Blackstone, or to my new friends, Iustinian, the Partidas, La Recopilacion de las Indias, the Ordonances of Louis XIV, and of Bilboa, the works of Febrero, Ferriere and Domat.

At St. Louis, I became acquainted with two gentlemen of learning, Mr. Bradbury, fellow of the Linnean Society, and Mr. Nuttal, also a naturalist. My acquaintance with these gentlemen, served to nourish the fondness I had acquired for similar pursuits. I travelled over a great part of the Missouri territory, and ascended the Missouri river 1700 miles. In the month of November, I embarked for New Orleans, where I arrived about the first of January. I afterwards, for two years, was continually occupied in traversing the new state, part of the time as Deputy Attorney General, and part as a district Judge. My health being somewhat impaired, I resigned my office, and returned to a more northern latitude, with a view of recovering my former vigor of constitution.

In the volume which I offer to the public, the reader is not to expect the scientific production of a philosopher, like Molina, Humboldt, or Depons, but the passing observations of a young lawyer, who had neither ability nor leizure to produce such a work. I have read with care, almost every thing in French, Spanish, or English, which relates to Louisiana, and have been cautious not to burthen my book with common place, or what may be easily procured from other sources. The French writers are very numerous, the principal are Charlevoix, Du Pratz, Dumont, the manuscript of La Harp, the three voyages of Henipin, the voyage of the Chevalier De Tonti, the works of La Hontan and Lafiteau, besides a great number more modern. Little of this country was accurately known, until it came into the possession of the United States; the sources of the Mississippi, Missouri, Red river, Arkansas, White river, have been fully explored by Lewis and Clark, by Pike, and by a number of private individuals. The delta of the Mississippi, which was very little known, has been actually surveyed by the officers of the American government. The work of Mr. Darby, lays open a new region. The book of

Major Stoddard, although in general well written, contains too much of what might be gathered in the closet; Mr. Ellicott, and Hunter and Dunbar, are the most scientific that have written of Louisiana; it is however a valuable work.

Travels through countries but recently inhabited by civilized people, must necessarily be different from those which have long been in a high state of cultivation. Instead of amusing incident, descriptions of manners and customs, characters of distinguished persons, political and moral reflections, historical reminiscences, and a variety of other topics; the traveller has only to describe the face of nature in a state almost primitive, the monotonous character of a few wandering savages, or the situation of settlements still in their infancy. To such a traveller, a knowledge of natural history is indispensable; and here I must confess my ignorance of the most essential qualification. Lord Coke (who was no naturalist) justly observes, that the law "is a jealous mistress and will not abide a rival;" to become a botanist, mineralogist, or geologist, requires long and undivided attention. No one, however, can be a greater lover than I am, of the *face of nature*, and I have always dwelt with rapture on her beautious features, although but little acquainted with the analysis of the character which they conceal. The reader will find topographical sketches or "views," some account of the soil, and of the navigation of rivers, descriptions of the towns and villages, and such other objects as would meet the eye of a transient passenger. It is also fair to mention that the work is still incomplete; there are several chapters yet wanting to fill up the third Book; the volume being already swelled to a larger size than I had intended.

It has always appeared to me, that the observations of travellers, if made with any tolerable degree of accuracy, should rank amongst the most useful productions, and should moreover be entitled to great indulgence. What can be more pleasing and instructive than the testimony of eye witnesses, relative to objects of the most interesting nature, which we are precluded from visiting ourselves, or than the remarks of intelligent persons on what chances to come under their notice during their peregrinations through distant countries! In the early ages of society, when there were no colleges or extensive libraries, travelling from one nation to another, was almost the only means of acquiring superior knowledge.

Multorumque hominum urbes, et mores cognovit.

A wise man and a great traveller almost signified the same thing. When in the form of narrative, this species of composition has all the attractions of romance, combined with the useful-

ness of truth. I have always perused the book of travels with peculiar delight, no matter how aukward its style, or humble the adventurer. In this kind of writing, the fidelity of truth is far to be preferred to the mere artifice or elegance of direction.* It may be said to be a species of composition free alike to the illiterate and the learned, requiring no peculiar or appropriate style; demanding neither the dignified march of history, the brilliancy of works of the imagination, nor the precision and regularity of those which are purely scientific, yet, admitting with propriety something of them all. Men of the most common acquirements are not thought presumptuous in attempting it; for it may be the fortune of such only, to have witnessed facts of the highest interest, or to have passed through countries not likely to be visited by the learned. Hence the various modes adopted by travellers, from the regular and systematic essay, down to the simple diary or journal.

* The travels of Frenchmen in general, are bedizened with conceits of the fancy, and those of Englishmen loaded with sluggish prejudice. This, at least, has been the case of nearly all which are written respecting America.

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VIEWS

OF

LOUISIANA.

IN THREE BOOKS.

CHAP. I.

Discovery—first Settlement—and Political History of Louisiana.

THE history of the first settlement of nearly all the American colonies, presents us with nearly the same recital of extreme suffering and hardy adventure on the part of the early settlers, as well as of the most grievous defects in the systems of colonization. Louisiana was not more fortunate than the rest; the whole series of colonial misfortune and suffering, were experienced by her in their most distressing shapes.—Not until after repeated failures and the lapse of more than a century from the first attempt, could it be said to have taken root, and it was at least a half a century more before it flourished. The history of this province is replete with interesting and instructive incident; the few pages, therefore, which I shall devote to the subject will scarcely enable me to do more than give an outline of the principal occurrences: even that, I hope will not be unworthy the attention of the reader. It was

not long after their settlement in Cuba, that the Spaniards became acquainted with the continent which formed the shores of the Mexican Gulph, and was visited by several of their navigators. Part was known by the name of Florida, and part was denominated New-Spain after having been conquered by that daring adventurer Hernando Cortez.—Under the name of Florida, they claimed all the remainder of the North American continent, east of the river Panuco, and declared these parts held by France and England as unjust encroachments upon their dominions.* Not that they had been the first to discover or explore those regions, but as having taught the European nations the way to the new world, of which they had received a free gift from Pope Alexander the sixth; by what means his holiness was authorised to make it, was not an enquiry for those days.

The marvelous fortunes of Cortez gave rise to a species of romantic adventure, carried on much in the spirit of the fictions of Ariosto. A vast continent almost unknown, afforded ample room for all the creations of fancy, and in consequence the country now called Louisiana, then a part of Florida, became the theatre of many extravagant adventures in pursuit of civilized Indians, supposed to be possessed of vast treasures; but the adventurers were wretchedly disappointed in their hopes. Strange as it may seem, among the idle fictions which were currently believed in that superstitious age, and constituted real incitements to their minds, was the celebrated fountain of Florida, which was said to

* Ker of Kerrsland's Memoirs, 1772—History of European settlements, in 1775, and Postlethwaybe on commerce, published 1745—Don Andres Gonzales de Boreca.

possess the quality of restoring youth, or of rendering it perpetual, to him who should be so fortunate as to bathe in its enchanted waters! Nothing was further from the intentions of such men, than to set down in the midst of a wilderness, and make permanent establishments; their only object was to rob the natives of whatever article of value might be found among them. The world received as little benefit from these expeditions, as those by whom they were undertaken.

Pontio de Leon, is generally considered as one of the first to land on the shores of Florida. In 1512, about six years before the conquest of Mexico, he penetrated some distance in pursuit of the enchanted fountain; but he was met by the natives with great ferocity, who considered him an invader and compelled him to seek his safety in flight. Pontio was compelled to return home with his remaining comrades, after having suffered much from hardships and the enmity of the Indians. In 1520, Vasques de Ayllon, landed and explored the vicinity of a river which he called the Jourdan in that part of Florida, which is now South Carolina; his stay however, was but little longer than that of De Leon, and his success no better.

A few years after this, Pamphile de Narvaes, (the same who had been sent by the governor of Cuba, to put a stop to the progress of Cortez,) obtained from Charles the fifth, the government of Florida. Narvaes coasted along the northern shore of the gulph of Mexico, landed several times, had frequent recounters with the Indians, who killed many of his people, and at length perished miserably himself, without having even built a fort.

Hernandes de Soto, being afterwards made captain general of Florida, in the year 1539, at the

head of eight or nine hundred men, landed in this country, and penetrated a considerable distance to the interior. He continued for several years wandering in search of gold, of civilized Indians and of miraculous fountains; in the meantime, he was much harrassed by the natives, his party was divided, and dispersed in small bands, the greater part of which, were never afterwards heard of, and finally de Soto himself died on the banks of the Mississippi.* The unhappy issue of these different expeditions, entirely dissuaded adventurers from any further attempt, until establishments were formed by the French.

In the year 1523, Verazzani, an Italian mariner, in the service of France, had discovered Florida, but like the Spanish adventurers, had attempted no settlement. This discovery was not followed up by the French, owing to the almost total inattention to America, during the troubled reigns of Francis II. and of Charles IX. The celebrated Coligny, about this time, desirous of obtaining freedom of religious worship, for the persecuted sect to which he belonged, conceived the idea of going in search of the country discovered by Verazzani, and of planting a colony of Protestants: a scheme rather encouraged by the King, who was desirous of chacing off the Hugonots. He cast his eye upon that part of Florida, which Verazzani had described as most suitable for the establishment of a colony; for besides the mildness of the climate, and the fertility of

* In the account of this expedition by Herera, it is mentioned that de Soto, in the year 1541, reached Mavilla, an Indian town, endowed with wooden walls. Here he had an engagement in which 2000 of the natives were slain, and 83 Spaniards, and 45 horses.—An Indian village named Chicaca, was burnt. See Amer. Ann. 1 vol. 91.—A tradition prevailed among the Kaskaskia Indians, of having killed the first tribes they had seen.

the soil, he fancied, as is observed by Charlevoix, the French would find no one to dispute their right, or even to trouble them. Jean de Ribault, being chosen by the admiral to undertake the expedition, sat off the 18th of Februrry, 1562. He first landed at a place which he named *Cape Francois*, about the 30 degrees of N. lat. and turning to the right, discovered a short time after, a river which he called *la riviere des Dauphins*, but did not enter. Pursuing this course, at the distance of fifteen leagues, he discovered another river, which he entered on the first of May, from which circumstance he gave it the name of la riviere *de Mai*. Here he found a great number of the natives, by whom, from that conciliatory policy, which the French have so successfully pursued, towards these people, he was well received: and reciprocal presents were given to the great satisfaction of the Indians. But having in view the river Jourdan, he hastened his departure from this place, but not without having first erected a pillar, on which were engraven the arms of France, and taking possession of the country in the name of the king and of the admiral: a vain ceremony, but which had been sanctioned by the prevailing custom of nations. He afterwards gave to the rivers which he successively discovered, for sixty leagues, the names of French rivers, and at length cast anchor, in what he supposed the Jourdan, but which was called afterwards by the Spaniards Santa Cruz, and by the natives Shawano,† at present Savannah. Ribault at this place, built a fort which he called Fort Charles; the Indians manifested the greatest friendship. Leaving here the persons who

† The Shawanese Indians formerly lived on this river.

had accompanied him, for the purpose of establishing a colony, he took his departure. Unfortunately, the direction and government of it, were resigned to a person altogether unqualified for the task: and who soon manifested great imprudence, and the most wanton severity. The colony in a short time suffered severely from famine, disease, and a complication of miseries: the unfortunate settlers, driven almost to despair, came at length to the resolution of endeavouring to regain their native land, in a vessel built by them under the most discouraging circumstances.

Here we cannot refrain from expressing our surprise, how men can be induced voluntarily to tear themselves, from the bosom of a refined and civilized society, to retire to a wilderness, and become the neighbours of savage men and of wild beasts! But the sweet and cheering hope of regaining their native soil, after having acquired the competent means of subsistence, has been found never to abandon the emigrants from France. Even the powerful incertive of religous freedom, was not sufficient alone. The belief that every part of the American continent was equally rich in mines of gold and silver, and other precious metals, will account, both, for the readiness with which adventurers, embarked in colonizing enterprises, and the ill success of the first expeditions; instead of cultivating the soil, the greater part of their time, was spent in running about in pursuit of treasures, hidden in the bowels of the earth.

The admiral, not discouraged by the failure of this attempt, soon succeeded in preparing another armament, consisting of three vessels provided with every thing that might be required by a young colony, and gave the command to Rene de Lauda-

mere. Fifty thousand crowns were advanced to this expedition, by the king and several gentlemen of fortune, and young persons of family, were desirous of making this voyage at their own expense; also there were joined to it some detachments of soldiers, chosen from among the veteran corps. On the 26th of June, 1564, he entered the Dauphin river, but did not land, much to the apparent chagrin of the Indians who seemed disposed to receive him in the most friendly manner. He continued his course to the May river, where he landed, ascended some distance, and, being well received by the natives, commenced an establishment. Notwithstanding all these advantages, and flattering auspices, a similar fate attended this colony as the first. The colonists were immediately carried away by the delusion of searching for the precious metals. This mania was taken advantage of by an artful chief, who drew them into a war with his enemies, a powerful tribe, by the following stratagem; he exhibited some pieces silver, (which it is supposed, he had procured from some vessel wrecked on the coast,) and declared that his enemies from whom he had taken them, possessed abundance of the same metal. The colony now began to feel the usual calamities, from dissention, famine, the neglect of tillage, and from an Indian war, which they had wantonly provoked. In this state of things, they had come to the resolution of re-embarking, when all of a sudden, to the general surprize, seven vessels appeared in the river. This proved to be Ribault who was returning with succour to the colony.

About this time the attempt of France to colonize Florida, became known in Spain, whose monarch claimed the country in virtue of the Pope's Bull,

and the particular discoveries of Pontio de Leon, and other Spanish adventurers. Pedro de Menendez, was immediately dispatched by that monarchy, to establish a colony, and to drive away the French. The armament, might be considered for that period, and for the occasion, a formidable one, consisting of ten vessels, and upwards of two thousand men. Before he could reach the place of his destination, a storm arose, which dispersed and scattered his ships, so that he arrived with only five. These were attacked by some English vessels, then at the mouth of the river, and compelled to fall down to the Dauphin, which they entered, giving it the name of St. Augustine; here they commenced an establishment. In the meanwhile Ribaut, contrary to the advice of his officers, embarked nearly all his force, in order to attack and destroy the Spanish fleet, and left but sixty or seventy men in his fort. He had come in sight of the Spaniards, when a dreadful tempest drove him off the coast. The Spanish commander, rightly conjecturing, that the greater part of the garrison, had been embarked on this occasion, resolved to march over land and storm the fort. This he accomplished in five days after his discovery of the English squadron, succeeded completely in his enterprise, meeting in fact with but little or no resistence. This achievement, honourable in its commencement, was however, wound up by one of those acts of barbarous cruelty, which causes humanity to shudder, when related of the most ferocious savages, and which stamps infamy and shame on civilized men; the prisoners who surrendered at discretion, and the miserable fugitives who were afterwards caught, were hung upon a tree, on which was suspended this sentence: NOT

AS FRENCHMEN BUT AS HERETICS AND ENEMIES OF GOD; a sentence, and an action which to use the words of the great Curran, was worthy of "that bigotry, whose banner is stolen from the altar of God, and her powers congregated from the abyses of hell." Menendez giving the name of St. Matheo, to the fort he had taken, left a garrison in it, and returned to St. Augustin. Ribaut at the same time paid dearly for his imprudence; after being shipwrecked on the Bahama banks, he attempted with the remainder of his force to regain the fort by land. Having approached it, after incredible hardships, he learned, that it was in the possession of the Spaniards. One of his officers was sent with proposals, and it was solemnly agreed on both sides, that the commander of the fort, should supply them with a vessel to return to France; but he no sooner found these unfortunate people in his power, than regardless of humanity and justice, and in order to giving the finishing touch to the bloody tragedy so well begun, he ordered them to be barbarously butchered.

Such is the melancholy story of these early colonies: it is related by Charlevoix, in his loose and rambling way, with many details, but which are more curious than instructive. This writer, expresses in the strongest terms his indignation, at the atrocious and abominable conduct of the Spaniards, and absolutely denies that Spain ever had any just right to the country, which was the scene of her violence and fraud.

France and Spain, were at this period in a state of profound peace, nor does this outrage, appear to have in the least, excited the indignation of the former, owing to the circumstance of the unfortunate

victims having been protestants and heretics. But it was left to a private gentleman, to avenge the injury offered to his country, and to chastise the barbarous usurpers of Florida. This was the Chevalier de Gourges, a man who in those times, had distinguished himself on various occasions for that romantic valour, which was then so highly esteemed; the indignation which he felt at the insult offered his country, was heightened by a sense of personal wrongs, having been for many years confined in Spanish prisons. Under the pretence of setting on foot an expedition for the purpose of attempting some enterprise on the coast of Africa, he formed at his own expense, and with the assistance of his personal friends, a considerable armament, and steered for Florida. On his arrival he was joined by the Indians, who had become greatly dissatisfied with the Spaniards, stormed St. Matheo, and carried it with little difficulty. The greater part of the garrison, who defended themselves with desperation, were killed in the assault; the survivors were now dragged to the same tree, on which the French had been hanged, and in the execution of a severe, but not unjust retaliation, were made to undergo the pains which they had before so cruelly inflicted; the former inscription being replaced by one to this effect, "NOT AS SPANIARDS, BUT AS MURDERERS AND CUT THROATS." Having destroyed the fort, and completed the principal object of his expedition, he soon after embarked; St. Augustin was considered as too formidable for his party.

The attention of France seems to have been altogether withdrawn from this quarter of the continent, during an interval of many years: being at

this time chiefly occupied with her settlements in Canada, which had begun to flourish. St. Augustin and all Florida, were about the same time abandoned by the Spaniards. The progress of these settlements however, in time led to the discovery of the Mississippi and to the settlement of Louisiana. The thirst of gain, and the zeal for spreading the gospel, co-operated in attracting adventurers and missionaries, to the interior of this vast wilderness, along the lakes, and on the rivers, which take their sources in their neighbourhood. About the year 1671, it became known in Canada from the information of Indians, that there was a great river to the west of New France, which neither flowed to the east nor to the north. It was conjectured that it must either discharge itself into the gulph of Mexico, or into the south sea; it consequently soon became a matter of great interest and importance, that this fact should be ascertained. With this view, M. Frontenac, then governor of Canada, sent the priest Marquette, and a trader named Joliet, about the year 1673 or 74, to explore this river, already famous. These persons accompanied only by three or four men, ascended the river of the Foxes, and crossed to the Wisconsing, which they descended to the Mississippi. They sailed down this river, discovering some considerable streams, of which the celebrated Missouri was then supposed to be one, and which was called by the Indians *Pekitanoni*. A few leagues below it they found three large villages of Illinois, which was the term of their voyage.

Little was done towards the further discovery of this interior region, until it was undertaken by the enterprizing La Salle. This gentleman had form-

ed a trading establishment at the lower end of lake Ontario, which at that time was thought no inconsiderable distance to venture into the Indian country. La Salle urged by the ambition of being a discoverer, and by the prospects of fortune, which now seemed to be opened, resolved shortly after the return of Marquette, to attempt the discovery of the Mississippi. He sat off in the year 1770, in company with Father Hennipin, (for it was usual to attach a missionary to these expeditions) and three or four men; he sailed along the lakes to Michigan, and then descended the Illinois river, but was compelled to remain here during the winter, and did not reach the Mississippi until the spring following. Father Hennepin with two men, ascended the Mississippi as far as the falls of St. Anthony; in the account which he gives of his voyage, he pretends to have also gone down the river to its mouth, but in this he has been detected in attempting shameful imposture. In the mean time La Salle finding that his resources were not adequate to his first designs, after examining the country about the Illinois, with which he was much pleased, returned to Canada, and left the Chevalier de Tonti in command of a little fort, which he had built and named Crevecocur. This gentleman, however, soon after followed M. La Salle. These two men by dint of great exertion succeeded in obtaining some necessary supplies, and in enlisting a number of volunteers, in the scheme of forming a settlement on the banks of the Mississippi, in the country of the Illinois. They reached their place of destination in the year 1773, and founded the villages of Kaskaskia, Cohokia, and several others of less note, La Salle, placing M. de Tonti at the head of his es-

tablishment,* proceeded to the mouth of the Mississippi, and after having examined the adjacent country, returned with the fixed resolution of establishing a colony. He returned to Quebec, and from thence sailed to France, where making known his discoveries and plans, he succeeded in obtaining considerable assistance from the king, and about the latter end of the year 1684, set sail from La Rochelle. But according to Charlevoix, from an unfortunate violence of temper, which often produced acts of ill timed severity, and from an overweening confidence in his own abilities and resources, which led him to treat the opinions of others with contempt, he rendered himself the object of dislike to his companions. This was the cause of his ultimate failure. He is said to have passed by the mouth of the river of which he was in search, though it was seen by every person on board the ships; and persisted with such obstinacy, that he would not even listen to proposals, of sending a boat to examine: having from his own observations and calculations, placed it considerably further south.—He arrived at the bay of St. Bernard, and now discovered his error, when it was too late, for the naval commander, became as obstinate as himself, positively refused to return, and placed him on shore with all his men and equipments. La Salle built a fort at this place, and shortly afterwards set out, with the intention of reaching the Mississippi by land, but was unfortunately assassinated by some of his own people, before he could effect his object. His whole company, with the exception of

* Stoddard—some authors state, however, that the Chevalier de Tonti, actually descended the Mississippi.

a few individuals, who reached Canada, finally perished, being either destroyed by the Indians, or taken prisoners by the Spaniards and condemned to the mines.

Notwithstanding these discouraging failures, the colonization of the Mississippi was not abandoned. M. D'Iberville, a gentleman of considerable celebrity as a naval commander, associated with M. Chateaumorand, was sent with two ships, to explore the country about the mouth of the river, and to form an establishment. He reached the bay of Pensacola early in 1799, where he found a Spanish fort, lately constructed and garrisoned by three hundred men, who had been detached from Vera Cruz, to take possession of Florida. They were not disposed to welcome their visitors, and even refused them permission to water.

D'Iberville continued his course to the southward, and entered the bay of Mobile. There was at this time a fine harbour here, but which was afterwards filled up by the sands left on the bar after a tempest. The first place at which he landed, was denominated *L'isle a massacre*, from the discovery of several human bodies mangled in the most shocking manner: but which was afterwards called *L'isle a Dauphin*. From this place he proceeded to the main land, and afterwards accompanied by a small party of his men, penetrated to the Mississippi. Having discovered this noble river, he returned to his vessels, and coasting along until he came to its mouth, entered and ascended a considerable distance, and erected a fort. He afterwards ascended in a barge as far as the Natches, with which place he was so much pleased, that he conceived the idea of founding a city there to be named Rosalie. The

Mississippi was at this period generally known by the name of the river St. Louis, which had been given by La Salle, but the country on both sides still retained that of Florida: it was not until about this time that it was generally known by the name of Louisiana.

It is related that shortly after the arrival of the French, two English vessels came in search of the Mississippi, having been induced to undertake the settlement of its borders, by the glowing and fabulous description of father Hennepin. One of these vessels ascended as far as the bend of the river, which is still called from the circumstance, the English turn: no attempt was made to land, probably from their having been anticipated, and from disappointment in the appearance of the country, which in a state of nature is far from inviting. Florida was also claimed at this time in virtue of the discoveries of Sebastian Cubot, who sailed along the coast without landing, and in virtue of her own chartres, which extended indefinitely. There can be nothing more absurd, than the two grounds of claim set up by England and Spain to this continent; the gift of his Holiness, who had no right to give, and chartres by the donor to herself. The custom of nations on the discovery of America, introduced the right of discovery into the publick law; by which, the adventurer who first beholds a part of this continent, or runs over it, may set himself up as the owner. The *right of settlement* in a country waste and unappropriated, but merely infested by wild men, by bears, panthers, wolves, rattlesnakes and mosquitos, is a different matter.

This colony thus planted by D'Iberville, laboured with many difficulties, and for years after its

commencement, was probably one of the least promising on the continent. Its establishment was regarded by those who had colonies in the vicinity with jealous eyes; the English on one side, and the Spaniards on the other, used every means in their power to retard its growth: but could the genius which visited Columbus in his prison have appeared to D'Iberville, he would have shewn him Louisiana, the greatest and wealthiest of the new world! The injudicious choice of the spot in the first instance, for the principal settlement, the unhealthiness of a climate against whose dangers experience had not taught to provide, the complicated wants and privations of the settlers, and the jealousies and disputes among the great men of the colony, were formidable enemies to its prosperity. Instead of planting themselves at once upon the fertile banks of the Mississippi, they selected the meagre soil of the Beloxi near the mouth of the Perdido, and the Isle of Dauphin, scarcely capable of producing a few garden vegetables. The French colonists, unlike the English and Dutch settlers, who applied themselves to the cultivation of the earth, threw away their time in a pitiful traffic with the neighbouring Indians, for the skins of wild animals, or imitated the mode of life of these lazy children of nature.

The return of D'Iberville to France, in the year 1700, was felt as a serious loss to the colony. He was a man of talents, and was likely to possess that kind of ascendency over the minds of the colonists, so essential in the colonial state. It lingered for twelve years, at one moment on the point of extinction, and again revived by some unexpected reinforcement. A good understanding was, how-

ever, maintained with the Indians, and after some time, they were on a tolerable footing with the Spaniards of Pensacola: former animosities were so far forgotten, that they even rendered each other occasional assistance. During this period, it is estimated that two thousand five hundred persons arrived in Louisiana, few of whom ever returned to France, and upwards of half a million of livres had been expended by the king; and yet at the close of this year, (1712) the whole population did not exceed four hundred souls, about twenty of whom were negroes. Their stock did not exceed twenty head of cattle of all kinds, and their agricultural progress was so trifling, that had they left the country, a few years would have obliterated every trace of their existence.

The king disgusted with the expences thus uselessly incurred, and discouraged by the little success in the establishment of this colony, conceived that it would be better to resign the charge to some enterprising and intelligent individual, who would feel an interest in bestowing the pains necessary to the discovery and remedy of the evils which opposed themselves, to the growth of this unpromising section. For this purpose, M. Crosat, a gentleman of great wealth and credit, was selected, and a grant of the colony was made to him, for the term of ten years, giving him the entire management of it, and the exclusive right of trade for that period. Great expectations were formed by Crosat; his vicinity to New Spain, it was supposed would enable him to carry on a lucrative trade with that quarter, and certainly, but for the gloomy jealousy of the Spaniards, he would not have been disap-

pointed. Many reports, at this time, had reached France, of the mines of the Illinois, it was confidently believed, the precious metals were to be found there, as well as in the spurs of the Cordilleras. With these objects in view, it may well be supposed, that the mere trade of the colony, was little thought of. The first Governor under this grant, M. La Motte, arrived and took possession in 1713. The first act of La Motte, after establishing something like order in the colony, was to dispatch a vessel to Vera Cruz, to request permission to trade with Mexico; this was positively denied. The expectations of discovering gold or silver mines in the Illinois, were also soon disappointed. He was not, however altogether disheartened, by the refusal of the Vice-roy: he now hoped that by gradually extending the establishments of Louisiana towards the Mexican provinces, he might ultimately succeed in his views. To further this design, an enterprising man of the name of St. Dennis, was sent with a small body of men, to establish a fort on the Red river, and to proceed from thence towards the Rio Bravo, in order to ascertain the situation of the Spanish settlements. St. Dennis found the country east of the Rio Bravo, entirely unoccupied, but discovered on the west side, a party of Spaniards who had just built a fort. Here he was well received by the commanding officer, whose sister he married. About the same time, two other detachments were sent into the country by La Motte: one of which built a fort near the source of the Sabine, called *Le Dout;* (which was maintained until Louisiana was ceded to Spain) the other penetrated to a nation of Indians called the Assinais, situated on a small river, twenty or thirty miles

west of Natchitoches, where a fort wase rected, the ruins of which, it is said, are still visible.

Some trade was now carried on with the interior of Mexico, by the means of these posts, and La Motte began to entertain hopes that it would gradually increase. But the jealous Spaniards, being apprehensive that the French settlements would approach too near theirs, and to the mines south of the Rio Bravo, although anticipated in the occupancy of the tract of country on this side of that river, resolved to set up a claim to this part of Florida; in pursuance of which it was *declared a province*, under the name of Texas, though without a single inhabitant, who owned their authority. This did not interrupt the good understanding which subsisted between them and the French, who were permitted to remain unmolested and even without remonstrance. This was probably owing to the friendly disposition of all the Indian tribes towards the French, and who were at the same time enimical to the Spaniards. But it was necessary that Spain should make an establishment of some kind, in order to give greater weight to her pretensions; and for this purpose, an artful expedient was resorted to.

In those times, it was customary for missionaries of different nations, even when at war, to unite amicably for the purpose of propagating the christian religion amongst the Indians; they were even sometimes attended by the troops of either, while the establishments formed with this view, were held sacred by all. But this pleasing trait in the intercourse of rival nations, was like every other good, liable to abuse, and to be perverted to the purpose of furthering designs of ambition and fraud. A Spanish priest of the name of Idalgo, addressed a

letter to M. La Motte, setting forth the advantages to the cause of christianity, which might be expected from the establishment of a mission at the Assinais, to instruct the poor ignorant Indians in the divine truths of the gospel, and to lead forth these benighted creatures to light and life; and in order that the praise of such a commendable undertaking, might be equally shared by both nations, he proposed that the French should join in forming the establishment. La Motte easily saw through the design of this, but relying on his own vigilance in counteracting it, and believing that by appearing to fall in with the scheme, he might derive other advantages, more than sufficient to counterbalance, particularly the trade to Mexico, resolved to comply. Instead of entering into a correspondence with Idalgo on the subject, it was deemed more expedient to send an agent to Mexico. The enterprising St. Dennis, then commandant at Natchitoches, was entrusted with this mission, and invested with the necessary powers, to negociate a treaty, which would remove the obstacles in the way of a friendly intercourse between the French and the Spaniards. He arrived in Mexico in June 1715, and was as favorably received by the Spanish Vice-roy, as he could have wished, and who consented to the request of a free intercourse and trade by land, to the Spanish provinces, as soon as the mission at the Assinais should be established. On the return of St. Dennis, his arrangements were approved by the Governor of Louisiana, and he was enjoined to see them carried into effect. He returned to the Spanish fort, on the other side of the Rio Bravo, and putting himself at the head of a body of Spaniards, conducted them in the spring of the year 1716, to the Assinais,

having previously assembled the chiefs of the different nations, and persuaded them to permit these people to remain among them. This was the first Spanish settlement in the province of Texas.

After accomplishing this, St. Dennis sat off a second time for Mexico, with a quantity of merchandize. The real designs of the Spaniards, now manifested themselves. Instead of being permitted to dispose of his merchandize, he was arrested as a smuggler and thrown into prison. He was afterwards permitted to go at large within certain limits, but despairing of being released, he effected his escape, and arrived in Louisiana in 1719. The Spaniards in the meanwhile, had so far encroached at the Assinais, and were so much strengthened, as to become the masters.

Pending these negociations, M. La Motte died, and M. Bienville, brother to D'Iberville, succeeded him. The abilities and experience of this gentleman, rendered him well qualified for the station: he had been in the colony from its first settlement, and was distinguished for probity and prudence.

In the meanwhile, Crosat, entirely disappointed in obtaining the profits which he had expected, gave up his privilege to the king in 1717, before the term of its duration had expired. The famous company of Law, which had at this time, nearly engrossed the whole trade of France, under the name of "the company of the Indies," took possession of Louisiana, and appointed M. Bienville the governor. He was welcomed at the Isle of Dauphin, on his return from France, whither he had gone, by the deputies of twenty-five Indian nations. This place had been the seat of government, but was soon after abandoned in consequence of the port

having been closed by the sands thrown up during a tempest: and nearly all the settlers were removed to Beloxi. The population at this period, consisted of seven hundred persons, and their whole stock, to four hundred head of cattle; but they did not raise a sufficiency of provisions for their own sustenance. Crosat, had expended upwards of four hundred thousand livres, and the trade scarcely amounted to three.

In 1719, war broke out between France and Spain, and put an end to the friendly intercourse which had hitherto subsisted between the two colonies. Bienville, undertook the reduction of Pensacola, which he effected with a party composed principally of Canadians, with a body of four hundred Indians, and the co-operation of three vessels of war. The fort surrendered without making resistance. The Spaniards after this, mortified at their loss, made formidable preparations for retrieving it: and at the same time, for the total destruction of the French colony. They retook Pensacola, but were repulsed in their attempt on the Isle of Dauphin. A French squadron, under M. Champlain, soon after made its appearance, and the Spanish fort was again besieged. The river Pedido, which was considered the boundary line, and at which a small post had been maintained, was appointed as the place of rendezvous for the land force: and accordingly Bienville with the soldiers and volunteers of the company, joined the Indian allies at this place. They proceeded over land, and in conjunction with the fleet, the fort was soon reduced without bloodshed. Eighteen hundred prisoners fell into the hands of the French, with public property to a large amount. After which the fortifications were de-

stroyed, and the French retired to the Perdido. In the year 1721, peace was concluded between the two powers; one of the articles of the treaty, was the restoration of Pensacola.

About this period, the settlements of the Beloxi, were ordered by the council general to be removed to New-Orleans. During the time the company had been in possession, the mother country, and the islands, had furnished four thousand and forty-four settlers, also one hundred and fifty galley slaves, and several hundred females, taken from houses of correction.* This accession of inhabitants, without being properly provided for, and the greater part of loose and worthless character, soon experienced every possible calamity. Such was the distress for the want of provisions, and the necessaries of life, that many of the colonists, and even the troops, were obliged to take refuge in the neighbouring Indian villages, where they received every mark of kindness and hospitality. How illy requited was this generosity, at a subsequent period, when the French settlements had been warmed into life and vigor! The fate of the Natchez, can well attest the truth of this remark. Great dissentions at the same time prevailed amongst the miserable colonists, as if their inevitable misfortunes had not been enough; these dissentions, were in some measure fomented by the English of Carolina, who were at the same time in the habit of stirring up such of the Indian nations, as were unfriendly. Fortunately for the French, the Chactas, then, and still, the most powerful nation of Louisiana, as well as all the smaller tribes, on the

* Stoddard.

lower part of the Mississippi, and on the Mobile, were friendly.

The year following, the colony obtained some supplies, and the disagreements of the authorities, were somewhat appeased. To prevent a recurrence of these evils for the future, it was resolved to distribute the colony in different places, selected as the most eligible for the views of the company, and where subsistence might be obtained with greater facility. The present flourishing settlement of Natchitoches, was then commenced, in the neighbourhood of the post, established by St. Dennis. A settlement was formed near the Natchez, at S. Catharine, and on the Mississippi above and below New-Orleans, and the foundations of that city were laid. About this time, a body of French expelled the Spanish settlers from the Adaize, where they had formed a settlement. In the same year (1722) a fort was built by Bernard de la Harp, at the village of the Caddoques, in the lat. 35, 55, which was called St. Louis de Carlorette. De la Harp wrote to the Spanish commandant, informing him of what he had done, and expressing a wish to cultivate a good understanding with him. In answer, he was required to withdraw from this post, it being within the territory of Spain; in reply, de la Harpe, persisted in the right of France to the province called Texas, and declared his determination to defend the possession which he then had. Nothing further passed; the French remained in quiet possession until the country was transferred to Spain, a small settlement having been formed near this. A fruitless attempt had been made shortly before, to form a settlement on the bay of St. Joseph; and two equally so, the first

under the command of Monsr. Beranger, the latter under De la Harp, on the bay of St. Bernard.

The French, of an ardent and enterprising cast of mind, had early turned their attention to the discovery of the country. Shortly after the establishments at Kaskaskia by La Salle, enterprising individuals ascended the Mississippi, towards its source, and explored a good deal of the country on some of the principal rivers, which discharge themselves into it. As early as 1683, they discovered some copper mines, about six hundred miles above the mouth of the Illinois, and some clays which were supposed valuable. In 1695, an establishment was attempted near these rivers, but which so much incensed the Indians, that it was abandoned. It has already been mentioned, that many reports had prevailed at this early period, of the mineral riches of this country. When Iberville was sent to colonize the Mississippi, there were sent in company with him several persons skilled in mineralogy, for the purpose of exploring the country of the Illinois, which name was about that time, bestowed generally to all the upper part of Louisiana. In 1702, an establishment was attempted, in order to facilitate this object, at the mouth of Blue river, lat. 44, 13. This also gave umbrage to the Indians; the French, to avoid hostilities, returned to a small river, one hundred miles above the Ouisconsing. Here they built a fort, opened some copper mines, and also, obtained *two thousand quintals of fine clay*. They were however, compelled to abandon this place also on account of the jealousies of the Indians. This put an end to the attempt of forming any settlement near the source of the Mississippi, or of working

and exploring mines in that quarter. They now attempted to ascend the Missouri, whose immense volume of water, could not but convince them, that it was no less important than the Mississippi. They ascended to the Kansas river in 1705, where they were well received by the Indians, and formed establishments; but finding that they could not be kept up without much trouble, and no profit resulting, they were soon abandoned. Another expedition was undertaken, by the orders of Iberville, by De la Harp, from the fort which he had built, to the Arkansas across the country. The particulars of this exploring expedition, are related by himself in a manuscript, still preserved in Louisiana. He examined the sources of the Washita, passed the high mountains, which divide its waters from the Arkansas, and descended that river to the Mississippi. He gives a tolerable idea of the country, but seems to be credulous, and some of his accounts border on the marvellous.

The settlements of the Illinois, were from the first, more flourishing than those on the lower Mississippi; having been formed principally by hardy Canadians, who were well acquainted with all the necessary precautions against the difficulties of these establishments. Kaskaskia had become a considerable town, and a large fort, called Chartres, had been constructed on the bank of the Mississippi. Spain becoming jealous of this flourishing state of the Illinois, resolved to form a stronger settlement on the Missouri. A large body of troops it is related, sat off from the Santa Fee, about the year 1720, for this purpose. The first object of the Spaniards was to destroy the Missouris, a powerful Indian nation, then in close alliance with the

French, and who resided on the river of that name, and near the Kansas. This nation being then at war with the Panis, it was their intention to engage them in the enterprise. Unfortunately the Spaniards mistaking their way, arrived at the village of the people whom they intended to destroy, but ignorant of their error, immediately made propositions as to the Panis. The Indians concealing their surprise, requested time to deliberate; and having collected their warriors, fell on the Spaniards in the middle of the night, and put them all to death, with the exception of the Missionary, who effected his escape on horseback. To prevent similar attempts, M. de Bourgamont, was sent up the Missouri, and built a fort which he named fort Orleans, near the Kansas river. This fort was destroyed about twenty years afterwards, and as all who were in it perished, it was never known by whom the deed was done.

The affair of the Natchez, forms an important incident in the history of Louisiana. These people, for twenty years, had been the stedfast friends of the French, and in their character, were exceptions to the general ferocity of the savages: indeed, from the account of these people, it seems, that there prevailed amongst them, a degree of civilization, much superior to what was generally met with in the American tribes. They had admitted the French into their villages, when in distress, and contributed to support them at fort Rosalie, at the Yazoo, and other places. These favors were returned with ingratitude, as soon as the colonists ceased to stand in need of their assistance; they were compelled to bear the insults and oppressions, of ignorant and insolent commandants and soldiers.

The temper of the Natchez, thus soured by ill usage, was raised to a high pitch of indignation, by the cruel treatment of one of the principal warriors, who happened to be indebted to a soldier, and had promised to pay in corn. On being required to discharge the debt, he excused himself on the score of his corn not being yet ripe. The soldier, not satisfied with this, threatened to beat him; the warrior defied him, on which, the other raised the cry of murder, which brought the guard, who fired on the warrior, and gave him a mortal wound. This abominable outrage was followed by no punishment of the perpetrators, on the part of the commandant, who was himself very obnoxious. The Natchez flew to arms, and but for the exertions of an influential chief, the *Stung serpent*, they would have instantly attacked the colony. Peace was restored, and the past consigned to oblivion by the Natchez. This was not the case on the part of M. Bienville, who was apprehensive that the pacifications of the Indians, was only feigned, and that they were secretly meditating some treacherous attack. He determined to anticipate the blow, and so weaken them, as to put it out of their power to injure him, should they be so inclined. He suddenly made his appearance at fort Rosalie, with seven hundred men, fell upon the unsuspecting Natchez, put many of them to death, and demanded the head of one of their principal warriors, whom he denominated a mutinous chief.

This step, proved as ill judged as it was wicked and cruel. The desire of revenge, seized more strongly upon their hearts, and they sat themselves to work in meditating the means of gratification. But the superiority of the French, required that

they should observe secrecy and caution. Six years elapsed before they had matured their plans: but the Indian, however volatile in other things, is not inconstant in the pursuit of revenge. It was but for a moment laid aside, when there appeared to be a probability, that a just punishment would be inflicted on those, by whom they had been ill treated. A young French officer, named Dumont, had warmly taken their part, and succeeded in arraigning the commandant of fort Rosalie, M. Chopart, before M. Perrier, who administered the government in the absence of M. Bienville. This was a joyful event to the Natchez, to whom the commandant was particularly obnoxious, as the author of their calamities. Unfortunately, on this occasion, injustice prevailed, M. Chopart, was reinstated in his command, and the young officer returned to France.

On the return of the commandant, he renewed his oppressions with greater cruelty than before; his first act, was to order the Indians, to remove from the white apple village, their principal residence, against which, they in vain remonstrated. Appealing to his cupidity, they prevailed upon him, to suffer them to remain for a few months, for which indulgence, they agreed to pay a tribute in corn and fowls. They immediately sat about contriving the means of revenge. The Chickasas, and other tribes, were invited to engage in a general massacre of all the French in the colony: these were to rise on the same day, and attack the French settlements in their vicinity. The mode fallen upon, to insure a simultaneous assault with tribes more remote, was by leaving with each, a bundle of sticks, containing a certain number, one

of which was to be taken from the bundle each day, and on the day of the last rod, the massacre would begin. The plot was retarded, and in some measure frustrated, by the mother of the Sun, who was the principal chief of the Natchez; from affection to the whites, or from displeasure, at not being at first entrusted with the secret, she withdrew a number of rods from the bundle, and thus hastened its execution. The time appointed for this, was the delivery of the tribute. While the French, entirely off their guard, were engaged in receiving it, the warriors suddenly fell upon them, put to death the commandant, and all the garrison, and the inhabitants of the settlements; sparing only some women and children, and the slaves. The settlements of the Yazoo and Washita, shared the same fate; a few who escaped, carried the intelligence to New-Orleans, and saved the rest of the colony. The colonists were now on their guard, and the rising of the Indians was too late. The Chactas, came forward in their defence, and to this tribe, the settlements on the Mobile, owed their preservation entirely.

Perier prepared to take revenge. He marched to Natchez with his whole force, and seven hundred Chactas, and some Chickasas, who ranged themselves on the side of the French, after quarrelling with the Natchez, on account of their having prematurely begun the attack upon the settlements. He defeated the Natchez in a skirmish on his approach to their town, where he found them shut up in two forts, constructed after their own manner; here they defended themselves with great obstinacy, holding out for more than a month, although seven pieces of cannon were brought against them. This

delay, was principally caused by apprehensions for the prisoners in the possession of the besieged; it was justly feared, that the Natchez would murder them, if driven to despair. The forts, at length, agreed to surrender, but on favorable terms; on delivering up their prisoners, and giving hostages for their future good conduct. The greater part of the nation some time afterwards, crossed the Mississippi, and settled on a branch of Red river.

The Natchez were neither reconciled nor induced to relinquish their hostile designs. In 1731, it was found necessary to raise another army of whites and Indian auxiliaries, with the intention of putting an end for the future to all apprehensions from this troublesome nation. Under the command of M. Perier, this army ascended Red river, and afterwards Black river, its tributary stream, to the place where the Natchez had fortified themselves in the greatest force. The siege was commenced on the 30th of January; the trench was opened and all the different works of the besiegers begun, and advanced apace during the rest of the day, and the whole of the night. The day following, the mortars and all things necessary for the attack, were brought on shore. Some bombs were thrown, which fell in the fort. The besieged made a sortie, killed a Frenchman and a negro, but were repulsed. On the 12th, bombs were thrown during the whole day but produced no great effect, and the besieged wounded two soldiers. On the 24th, they hoisted a white flag; M. Perier at the same time caused one to be hoisted at the head of a mast; a short time after, an Indian was seen advancing with a calumet in each hand. He brought proposals of peace, and offered on the part of his chief to return the pri-

soners and negroes in their possession. Terms of any kind would not be attended to unless the chief came in person; this the Indian declared could not take place, but observed to M. Perier, if he would advance to the corner of his entrenchment, the great chief would come to the end of his fort. The Indian was dismissed with the message to his chief, that if the prisoners and negroes were delivered up, the general would then declare his further determination. These being brought and delivered to M. Perier, he declared that unless the great chief came to him in person, he would continue the siege, and deny all quarter. The chiefs finally agreed to surrender, and with them the greater part of the people; the remainder who refused to give themselves up, found means during some very heavy rains to escape and join the rest of the nation. About two hundred fortified themselves some distance up the Red river, but were attacked and destroyed by St. Dennis. Those that fell into the hands of the French were disposed of as slaves: a thing very unusual in their conduct towards the Indians, which has been marked with a greater degree of kindness than that of any of the European nations, but which on this occasion, may be ascribed to the unconquerable enmity of these injured people. From that day the Natchez no longer existed as a nation.

In this year, (1731) Louisiana, was restored by the company of the Indies to the king. The famous Mississippi bubble had burst, and involved in ruin all that had been concerned in it. Its history is similar to other instances of popular delusion, originating in accident, or in the designs of artful men. Louisiana was represented as a paradise, its surface adorned with all the beauties of nature, and

containing underneath, all the riches that could tempt human cupidity. While the mania lasted, the colony derived considerable benefits from it; benefits whose effects continued long after to be felt. Large sums of money were expended, and men of the first respectability, came to see the fairy region; the number of books published on the subject of Louisiana, is truly surprising, but few of them, however, are deserving of much attention. The diappointment occasioned by the Mississippi scheme, was followed by disgust to the colony, but it had by this time, acquired sufficient strength to stand alone. The settlements in upper Louisiana, or the Ilinois, of which we will speak in the next chapter, were by far the most flourishing in an agricultural point of view: those on the lower Mississippi, even as late as 1763, were far from being considerable. The settlements were to be found at New-Orleans, at the Natchez, on the Mobile and its branches, and at the Beloxi. The lumber trade with the West Indies, and the trafic with the natives, together with an inconsiderable export of tobacco, constituted the principal sources of wealth. The greatest drawback on the prosperity of the colony, was the miserable practice of granting monopolies, which obliged the planters to dispose of their produce to the company, at such prices as it chose to fix. The shameful impositions practised by the monopolists, repressed all disposition to engage industriously in the cultivation of the earth, for whatever surplus there might be, the gain would be the same.

Charlevoix, has chosen to attribute this state of the colony, to the enmity of the English and Spaniards; but in reality the blame rested upon the

French king. The Spaniards, he says, "did not act as openly as the English, against a colony at which they had taken great umbrage; yet they had taken their measures more effectually to arrest its progress, and to prevent the formation of any new establishment. They have in fact succeeded even until now, (1736) in retaining us by the pursuit of a contemptible trade, between the stream which was neglected to be settled, (Mississippi) and Pensacola, on a sandy coast, (Beloxi) on an island (Dauphin) not better, and upon a river (Mobile) which although well enough to occupy, is yet not fitted for any plan of colonization. It must be confessed, that on this occasion, M. D'Iberville was not judicious, or that he had no time to carry his designs into execution."

CHAP. II.

War with the Chickasas—Civil and Political history of Louisiana, down to the treaty of Ildephonso.

THE French, had given to their American possessions, the name of New France, which included Canada, the lakes, and all the valley of the Mississippi. On this river, and on all its branches, they had either established posts with a few settlers, or had sent Missionaries to the Indian villages. The Ohio, was called La Belle Riviere, from its singular beauty, but lost its name at the Wabash, being at first, regarded merely as a tributary of this river. On the Wabash, the settlement of Vincennes was made much about the time of those at Kaskaskia and Cohokia. All their settlements in this quarter, were designated under the name of the Illinois, from a powerful tribe of Indians, who were found in possession.

We have already seen, that shortly after the discovery of the Mississippi, a number of Canadian settlers were induced to take up their residence at this place, in a country and climate so much more pleasant, than that which they had left. A monastery of Jesuits, was established here, which succeeded in converting a number of the natives, to christianity. I am credibly informed, that they had at one time, upwards of five hundred converts. It was

not long, before the Kaskaskians, began to diminish and degenerate, as it has always been found to be the case, in the intercourse of the natives with the whites, and to the Canadians they left the name, and proprietorship of their village.

The name of the Illinois, was given to both sides of the river. It was this part of Louisiana, which furnished so many topics of glowing descriptions, to the French writers during the existence of Law's scheme. Its beautiful natural meadows, its picturesque scenery, its supposed wealth in minerals, served to captivate the minds of the French, and it came to be spoken of as a kind of paradise. The settlements of the Illinois, were in a flourishing state, while the other parts of Louisiana were entirely the reverse.

Some years after the war with the Natchez, Louisiana again experienced an Indian war. The English traders who had established themselves among the Chickasas, in order to prevent the French from interfering with their traffic, were continually engaged in exciting the animosity of the Indians against them. This produced an open rupture, and M. Bienville, led a considerable force up the Mobile, for the purpose of attacking their principal fortification, but in this, he was repulsed with disgrace. A party, which marched from the Illinois, met with no better success. Determined not to renounce his design of humbling these formidable neighbours, and having received considerable reinforcements from France, he ascended the Mississippi, to what is now called the Chickasa bluffs. His force was the largest that had ever appeared in this quarter. But in consequence of unnecessary delays, his supplies gradually failed, and his incon-

stant allies, began to desert him before he had taken up his march against the Indian villages. He was, therefore, compelled to patch up a peace, on any terms, and to return with very little honour.

From the year 1740, until the commencement of the war between England and France in 1754, few events of importance occurred in Louisiana. The settlements had been gradually extending themselves, and in some parts were already in a flourishing state; at all events, the difficulties inseparable from infant colonies, were all surmounted; they were not only placed beyond the danger of want, but had already a respectable export of tobacco, cotton, indigo, peltry, hides, ship timber, &c.; and could purchase in return, many of the luxuries of life. The symptoms of the quarrel between England and France, which terminated so unfortunately for the latter, shewed themselves about this time. As the colonies of each extended, differences would naturally arise, respecting their boundaries, which from the first, had not been defined. Each claimed to an unlimited and extravagant extent, and force alone could decide, where both were determined to stretch their pretensions as far as possible. The Indian nations were engaged in continual wars by the arts of the two rivals, while they were themselves at peace. This may be one cause of the rapid decrease of those tribes. The French, anticipating a struggle for the preservation of their American possessions, as early as the year 1749, strengthened themselves by fortifications on the lakes, on the Ohio, on the Wabash, in the Illinois, and other parts of the valley of the Mississippi. To this valley, they had the best right, if first discovery and earlier occupancy, could give it.

The British set up in opposition their charters, in other words, they had called it theirs, and set about counteracting the measures taken by the French, to secure their possession. The Ohio company was formed, for the purpose of trading with the Indians, but under the real intention of being used as a political engine. This contest of ambition between the nations across the Atlantic, necessarily involved the colonies; the British colonists, were particularly exposed, as the French, from their possession of Canada, had a control over the Indians, and could set them on like wild beasts to murder the frontier settlers.

In the year 1753, the French had erected fortifications at Erie, Niagara, and at the confluence of the Allegheny and Monongohela, which was deemed a flagrant encroachment on the British territory. It was at this period, that the great Washington, then a youth, commenced his noble career. Having discharged an arduous duty, in his mission to Erie, he soon after, performed a conspicuous part in the war which ensued. France at this time, pursued the same policy of instigating the Indians, that was afterwards so well adopted by Great Britain, and the whole frontier from New England to South Carolina, was exposed to their cruel ravages.

The contest terminated most unfortunately for France, both in Europe and in America. Canada and its dependencies, were compelled to capitulate. The French fleets were defeated at Toulon, and in the Bay of Biscay, and the army of France totally routed at Minden. She sued for peace, but was baffled for a long time, by the artful policy of Pitt. One of the difficulties which stood in the way of settling their dispute, was the establishment of the

eastern limits of Louisiana: the English claimed the Ohio, and produced the capitulation of Canada, by the Governor M. Vandreuil, by which, it was included as a part of that province. An accommodation, being thus hopeless, France persuaded her cousin Spain, to enter into the celebrated family compact of 1761, by which, the two sovereigns stipulated to defend the possessions of each other, in whatever part of the world they might be. The renewal of hostilities, was still more unfortunate for France; and Spain, was made to bear no inconsiderable proportion; she lost Havana, the key of her American possession, and her commerce was greatly injured. France, was almost a bankrupt, without money, or credit, and consequently unable to make further resistance; she was therefore compelled to make peace upon any terms that might be offered to her.

On the 3d of November, 1762, the preliminaries of peace, were signed at Fontainbleau between England, France and Spain. By this treaty, all of Louisiana east of the Mississippi, together with the Mobile, and all that the king of France possessed in that quarter, was ceded to Great Britain; while Spain, in consideration of the restoration of the Havana, ceded her possessions in Florida. France had reserved to herself the island of Orleans, and western Louisiana, which by a secret treaty made on the same day, she ceded to Spain, in consideration of the sacrifices she had been compelled to make by entering into the family compact. Thus was France stripped of all her possessions on the continent, which at one moment promised to rival those of England or Spain. The treaty was ratified at London, on the 10th of February, 1763.

In the year 1764, Britain took possession of Florida, of the French settlements on the Mobile, and on the Mississippi, from the Manchac to the Yazoos: but extinguishing the name of Louisiana, and substituting that of West Florida. It has been stated by some late writers, that she then made the 31 deg. of latitude, and afterwards the Yazoo river, the boundary between her other colonies, but I have not seen any authority for this; and indeed separated already by a vast wilderness, such a measure was unnecessary. This boundary was not thought of until afterwards, when settled by treaty. It was further stipulated, that Britain should have a right to the free navigation of the Mississippi to its mouth.

The transfer of Western Louisiana, was made known to the province in the same year, that Britain took possession of Florida, and excited great discontent. The people were at first somewhat soothed by the belief, that the transfer had not been real, and would never be carried into operation, and contented themselves with sending a petition, or remonstrance, to France. But they were undeceived by the arrival of Don Ulloa, in 1766, with a detachment of Spanish troops for the purpose of taking possession. Enraged by this disappointment, they flew to arms, and compelled the Spaniards to retire. Three years now passed away, before the attempt to take possession was renewed, the province still continuing under the government of officers appointed by the king of France. In the mean time, they had become reconciled to the change of government, from conviction that it was inevitable and on the arrival of Oreilly, they submitted peaceably. This did not satisfy; their past

conduct must be punished, so as to leave an impression of terror upon their minds, which would secure their obedience in future. The step now taken by Oreilly, to whom the Louisianians have attached the name of bloody, was basely treacherous and unjust. He invited twelve of the principal inhabitants to an entertainment, and then barbarously murdered them.* Such detestable atrocity might inspire terror, but could never be recollected but with feelings of hatred. Notwithstanding this shocking act, the subsequent conduct of the Spaniard, was favourable to the prosperity of the colony; he sketched the form of the colonial government, which was preserved with little alteration by his successors, and he introduced many improvements.

Nothing of moment, occurred to disturb the tranquility of the colony, until the eventful struggle of the American states for independence. Spain was at first much embarrassed, what course to pursue. She had too much at stake in America, to encourage a revolt, which might return upon herself to plague her; and yet, she could not easily resist the temptation of seizing this opportunity of regaining her possessions. Yielding to the solicitations of France, she took part with the United States. Towards the close of the year 1779, Galvez, the governor, a man of superior talents, and uncommon energy of mind, organized the militia, and with the assistance of a few regulars, took possession of Baton Rouge, and other posts on the river. The next year he succeeded in taking Mobile, and having received considerable reinforcements from Havana, proceeded against Pensacola. This place, after a

* The father of the present governor of Louisiana, was one of the number.

Villere.

siege of some months, and considerable loss on both sides, was compelled to surrender.

While the Spaniards were thus successfully pursuing their conquests in Florida, the settlements of what was now called Upper Louisiana, were threatened with a formidable attack of British and Indian auxiliaries from Michilimackinac. They suddenly appeared before St. Louis, and massacred a number of the inhabitants in its vicinity; fortunately for those people, General Clark made his appearance, at this critical moment, at the head of a large force, on which the British suddenly retired, leaving their allies to shift for themselves, and who soon after dispersed.

By the treaty of peace in 1783, between Great Britain and the United States, the Mississippi was fixed upon as the western boundary, from its source to the 31st degree of latitude, and along this line to the St. Mary, &c. the remainder of the British territory, was ceded to Spain, who accepted the session according to these boundaries. She still continued in possession, however, of the country as high up the river as the Yazoo, and at the same time disputed the right of the United States to the navigation of the Mississippi. To the western country, the navigation was indispensible; without it, they could have no market for their produce. Spain was probably actuated, by the desire of producing a separation of the western states, from the eastern, and thus render them dependent on her; there is little doubt, but that she was engaged in deep intrigue to bring this about. The two powers were several times on the point of appealing to arms, when the subjects of dispute were at last adjusted by the treaty of amity and commerce of 1795.

By this treaty, three important points were gained; the Spaniards were to surrender the posts on the river, commissioners were to be appointed to run the line between the Floridas, and the United States, and the latter, were to have the right of deposit for their western produce, at the city of New Orleans.

Mr. Ellicot the American commissioner, arrived at the Natchez in 1797, but was obliged to remain upwards of a year, before the Spaniards would enter upon the business for which he had been sent. Great discontents, in the meantime, pervaded the inhabitants, on account of the delay on the part of Spain in evacuating the country. It was not until the close of the following year that this was done, and then apparently with great reluctance. The running the line, commenced about the same time. There is sufficient proof, that the obstacles thrown in the way of this business, originated on the part of Spain, from a belief, that our union could not hold long; at this very moment, it was known that both the English and French, were intriguing to bring about a separation of the western states: this appears to have been a favourite idea with all our enemy, and never until the purchase of Louisiana, did we rest in safety.

This important event, as unexpected as it was glorious, at last occurred. During the presidency of Mr. Adams, it had been seriously in contemplation to wrest Louisiana from Spain by force of arms, but this, soon after the election of Mr. Jefferson, fortunately was rendered unnecessary. The colony was conditionally ceded to France in 1800, and afterwards, the cession confirmed in 1801. The French made preparations for taking

possession of Louisiana, with a body of twenty-five thousand men, but were prevented by the blockade of the fleet and army, in one of the ports of Holland. This occurrence, together with the state of French affairs at this moment, induced the republic to cede Louisiana to the United States, by treaty of the 18th April 1803. Possession was delivered by the Spanish functionaries to M. Laussat, in November, and twenty days afterwards, by him to Governor Claiborne, and General Wilkinson, on the part of the United States.

I have thus given a rapid outline of the history of Louisiana, until its transfer to the United States. It would not suit the plan of these sketches, to go more minutely into details, yet without some outline, my views of this interesting part of America, would have been very imperfect.

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CHAP. III.

Boundaries—Importance of Louisiana.

THE cursory view we have taken of the first settlement of Louisiana, will furnish some assistance in the discussion of a subject of no small difficulty and perplexity, to wit: its boundaries. On this score it is feared, that serious contentions may one day arise between us and the two adjoining powers, Spain and England. The manner of settling the continent in the first instance, where all was vague and undefined, has given rise to these difficulties. Perhaps after all, it is of little moment; for the accumulating flood of American population, which now rolls to the westward, will not be restrained by ideal lines drawn on the map of a wilderness. It will one day spread over every plain between us and the Pacific, and will not stop before it touches the confines of the Mexican provinces.

The first settlements of Louisiana, it will be recollected, were on the Mobile and on the bay of St. Bernard. All the French writers are agreed in fixing the Perdido to the east as the limits and the Rio del Norte, to the west. These boundaries may be seen in many ancient maps, both French and English, and they are besides, stated to be such in express terms by several writers. The data upon which we rely is as follows:

1. The General Atlas of 1712; the English Atlas of 1763; the Map of M. D'Anville of 1745; the Maps in the first edition of Postlethwaite on commerce; the Map of du Pratz.

2. The grant to Crosat by the king of France, where the S. W. and the eastern limits are defined. The manuscript of La Harp, found at Natchitoches. The work of Du Pratz, and the history of New France by Charlevoix.

A dispute has already occurred between the United States and Spain, with respect to the eastern boundary, the latter denying that under the treaty of Ildephonso, any thing more was ceded than the western side of the Mississippi, together with the island of Orleans. The decision of this question, depends on the construction of the clause in the treaty by which the cession was made to France, and to which the United States are referred for a description of the limits of Louisiana. I have considered this question more at large, in another publication. The clause, and my interpretation of it, are as follows:

"Spain retrocedes the province or colony of Louisiana, with the same extent that it actually has in the hands of Spain, and that it had when France possessed it, and such as it ought to be, after the treaties subsequently entered into between Spain and other states."

1. *In the same extent that it now has in the hands of Spain*—for it was not in the power of Spain to restore the province in its whole extent, inasmuch as a considerable part of it then appertained to the United States, obtained by conquest from Great Britain, and acceded to by Spain.

2. *And that it had when France possessed it*—that is, all of Louisiana, then in the actual possession and control of Spain, by whatsoever denomination then known; and whether obtained by cession from France, or by conquest from Great Britain, is totally immaterial; the only question is, did it belong to Louisiana when France possessed it? Of this no doubt exists.

3. *And such as it ought to be, after the treaties subsequently entered into, between Spain and other states*—that is, Spain was not to be accountable for such parts or portions of Louisiana, as she had actually ceded, and which were at that moment beyond her control; as by the treaty of 1795, she had renounced in favour of the United States, all the country north of the 31st degree of latitude. This treaty, together with that of 1783, and the one of the same year with Great Britain, are the only treaties which relate to the boundaries of the province, subsequent to the cession to Spain of 1762: but they relate to that part of it called by the English West Florida, and not to Louisiana as Spain would wish to restrict it. The line of the 31st degree, is a considerable distance above the Iberville, and no subsequent treaties have any relation to this boundary.

There can be very little doubt, that it was the intention of Napoleon, to possess this country in its most advantageous shape; and without both sides of the river from the 31st degree, together with the lakes, and the Mobile, the country would be incapable of defence. The clause appears to have been penned with great caution by Talleyrand. The section between East Florida and the Mississippi, had been erected into a separate government, and

had it not been stipulated, that France was to repossess, in the same extent as she had held previous to the year 1762, a difference of opinion in the construction of the treaty, would unavoidably have arisen much more difficult to reconcile. Spain might then have said with more justice, than she does at present: "true, West Florida was a part of Louisiana, but having been severed by conquest, it is no longer so; the separation, or dismemberment was the act of France herself, and from the party thus possessing, Spain obtained it by conquest, it has therefore ceased to have the least connexion with Louisiana." All this difficulty is obviated by referring to a date anterior to 1762; and unless done with this view, such a reference would have been an absurdity. And again, had it not been stipulated, that Louisiana was ceded in the extent *then* held by Spain, it might have been argued, that Spain had undertaken to restore the province to France *entire*, and whole as when held by France.

But where the necessity of all this guarded caution in the stipulations, if no more was intended to be ceded than the western side of the Mississippi, with the island of Orleans, or western Louisiana, as it had been ceded to Spain. Every other word were not merely useless, but totally irrevelant. It was certainly in the power of Spain to restore any part of ancient Louisiana, which might happen to be in her power, no matter by what means she came by it, and unless her words mean this, they mean nothing.

Shortly after taking possesion of Louisiana, we had a dispute with Spain respecting the boundary between us and their internal provinces, and which was very near being settled by an appeal to arms.

General Wilkinson was encamped on one side of the Sabine, and Cordero on the other; it was finally stipulated that this river, should be the line until a differnt one could be agreed upon by their respective governments. It is said, that under the French government the Rio Hondo, on this side of the Sabine, had been regarded as a boundary for civil purposes between the nearest Spanish and French settlements.

With respect to the limits of Louisiana to the north west, they must be fixed by a stipulation with Great Britain, for there is nothing by which they can be determined. A continuation of the line from the head of the Lake of the Woods, to the Missouri mountains, might be a fair proposition, although even in this case, we should have to yield some of the waters which discharge themselves into the Missouri

To the westward, no limits were ever assigned by the French while they possessed Louisiana, but it was considered as including, at least, all the country whose streams, either directly or indirectly discharged themselves into the Mississippi. Our geographers, have boldly claimed to the Pacific; we are certainly the first white people who explored the western region near the sources of the Missouri and of the Columbia, and who descended this latter river to the sea; we have filled up on the map from our discoveries, what was before no better known than the interior of Africa. How far this right of discovery may carry us, I will not take upon me to say; I am no advocate for a right which stands so badly supported by reason, in the case of other nations, and consistency forbids that I should claim it in favour of my own country. This is certain how-

ever, that our right such as it is, is much better supported than that of any other nation, by reason of our exploring expeditions, and our establishments for trading with the Indians.

If we adopt the boundaries just laid down, Louisiana will be found to constitute two thirds of the whole territory of the United States: and furnishes ample space for an empire as great as that of Russia or China. It is becoming a favorite amusement with the Americans to speculate on their future magnificent destiny; it is difficult to say whether this ought to be encouraged or not; on the one hand, it may generate national vanity, similar to that of the descendants of an ancestry once powerful; and the only difference is, that as they boast o what they have been, we boast of what we will be. On the other hand, there is a kind of national pride, of which we stand in need, to render that a natural which is yet an artificial bond. Let us however, be modest in our anticipations of events, which are in the hands of the Great Dispenser of all good and who often visits the vain glorious with better disappointments.

In estimating the importance of this division of the American empire, we should be greatly deceived, if we merely take into view its comparative geographical extent. Constituting the central, or interior part of North America, much of it is at too remote a distance from the Ocean, to have an easy and advantageous intercourse with the rest of the world. Much of the country west of the Mississippi, when compared to the eastern section of the valley, and to the states on the shores of the Atlantic, may be considered as badly watered, and devoid of that facility of intercourse by means of navigable

rivers, with which they are so happily supplied. I am to be understood as speaking of Louisiana in general; the two important sections of it, the territory of Missouri, and the state of Louisiana, are not exceeded, either in point of climate or soil, by any portions of equal magnitude on the continent, and may be justly regarded as among the most interesting parts of our empire. But when we look upon the chart of Louisiana, we will discover that these form but a small proportion of its extensive surface.

Were I to enumerate all the political advantages arising from the acquisition of Louisiana, I could fill a volume. To say the least of it, it may be regarded as the most providential occurrences in our history. Had this part of America, continued in the hands of any other state, we should have inevitably been drawn into bloody and expensive wars, or what was more to be dreaded, a separation of the western states would have taken place. The free navigation of the Mississippi, to us indispensable, would ever have been liable to interruptions, while Louisiana remained in the hands of any European nation. Who would deposit the key of his house, in the hands of his enemy? Sooner or later, it must have been ours, or we must have told the western states to shift for themselves.

Politicians have long disputed the question, whether an extensive territory is an injury or an advantage to the stability of a republic. It will probably be decided by the experiment in which we are now engaged. I will venture to suggest a thought. In a nation circumscribed to narrow territorial limits, there is much to be apprehended from the momentary bias of opinion; the *permanent interests*, may not be

sufficiently diversified, and should there be found to exist two great parties, designated by local situation, who should believe their interests entirely opposed, the artificial union would soon be at an end. But over the vast surface of the United States, notwithstanding those rapid and powerful conductors of public feeling or intelligence, the newspapers, there is no danger of rousing the people to that pitch of phrenzy and madness, which might be dangerous in a state confined to narrower bounds. Besides, the northern and southern interests, of which so much was said during the late war, are counterbalanced by a third, whose interest is connected with both. The western states, are devoted to agriculture, but will always have the most intimate relations with the commercial cities to the east of the mountains, and will be in a great measure dependant on them for the conveniences and luxuries of life.

The security obtained for our western states and territories, against the numerous tribes of savages who would be at the disposal of any nation holding Louisiana, may be ranked as no inconsiderable advantage gained in the acquisition; while our vicinity to the Mexican provinces, will enable us to carry on a trade, which, if permitted to be free, must in a short time become of incalculable value. It is ardently to be wished, that these people, during their present struggle, may accomplish their independence, and cast off the yoke of the foreign government, which has hitherto ruled them as it were by the spells of Circe, by using every art to brutify their minds in ignorance and debasement. Could these unfortunate men be regenerated, by the ennobling genius of liberty, the northern continent would be exclusively possessed by two great nations, united

in friendship by harmonizing interests, and sympathy of government; lovers of peace, and without motive for war.

CHAP. IV.

General description—Face of the country beyond the settlements—capacity for the reception of population—curious appearances.

THIS extensive portion of North America, has usually been described from the inconsiderable part which is occupied by the settlements, as though it were confined to the immediate borders of the Mississippi, as Egypt is to those of the Nile. By some, it is represented in general description, as a low, flat region, abounding in swamps and subject to inundation; which is the same thing as if the Netherlands should furnish a description for all the rest of Europe. Others speak of Louisiana as one vast forest or wilderness:

"Missouri marches through his world of woods."—*Barlow.*

which is far from being the case, for excepting on the banks of this river, and that not more than one half its course, the country through which it passes, is deplorably deficient in woods. If then, we are to describe Louisiana, not from a small district, important because already the seat of population, but from the appearance of the whole, combined in a general view, we should say, that it is an extensive region of open plains and meadows, interspersed with bare untillable hills, and with the exception of some fertile tracts in the vicinity of the great rivers by which it is

traversed, resembling the grassy steppes of Tartary or the Saharas of Africa, but without the numerous morasses and dull uniformity of the one, or the dreary sterility of the other. The fertile tracts are chiefly to be found, in the narrow vallies of the great rivers Missouri, Mississippi, Arkansas, Red River, and some of their principal tributaries; the two largest bodies of fertile soil are the delta of the Mississippi, which is much interspersed with lakes, marshes, and sunken lands, that will require ages to reclaim, and the territory of the Missouri, as limited by the boundaries lately agreed on with the Indians, which bears a strong resemblance to the West Tennessee in some of its features. In order to give a more clear and distinct idea of the country which I have undertaken to describe, I will consider it under three divisions;

1. The regions beyond the settlements.
2. The territory of the Missouri.
3. The state of Louisiana.

The present chapter will be taken up in giving some general description of the first; the chapters following it, will detail what relates generally to all, and a more minute account will be given of the Missouri territory, and the state of Louisiana, in the two last books. I am convinced that nothing contributes so much to brevity, as well as to perspicuity, as the observance of order and method. My intention is not to write a book of travels that may amuse, but to give the result of my observations in the most compendious form, in order that it may be useful.

Volney has denominated a *valley*, the space which lies between the Alleghanies and the great western mountains, and drained by the Mississippi, and its tributary streams. But it is to be observed, that the

western section of this valley, taking the great river as the centre, is more than twice the magnitude of the eastern, that its rivers are on a larger scale, and that the mountains which give rise to them, are more considerable than the Alleghanies.

The great western chain, has not received any fixed and determinate appellation; by Lewis and Clark, the term Rocky mountains has been applied, by Mr. M'Kensie, the Chippowyan, and by Mr. Darby in his excellent treaties, the Missouri mountains. The last name appears to me the best, particularly as it corresponds with that of the Alleghenies, which give rise to the Ohio, and the great rivers which flow from the opposite side of the valley. They are without doubt, a prolongation of the chain of the Annahuac, or Andes of South America, their course nearly north and south. From these mountains, there is an inclined plane or slope, to the middle of the valley, with an elevation to the north, and an opposite depression, so as to be admirably disposed by the hand of nature, to afford a uniform direction to all the streams which pass over it, and flow to the Mississippi. The Missouri mountains, protrude several secondary ranges or spurs, of considerable elevation, which separates the waters of the Arkansas from the Missouri, those of the Arkansas from Red river, and of the latter river, from the Rio del Norte; the last of these spurs, called by the Spaniards the Cordilleras, are much the most considerable of the secondary ridges. The tributaries of the rivers just mentioned, are again separated by other hills or mountains, of an elevation little inferior to many parts of the Alleghanies; so that, although we have called the country drained by the Mississippi a valley, this is only to be understood with relation to the two

great ranges of mountains by which it is enclosed. I have very little doubt, but that the geologist will be able to trace a perfect connexion between all the spurs, ridges, and dependencies which traverse this part of the continent. A remarkable feature in North America, is this regularity, which would seem to show, that it has undergone fewer changes, since the creation, than any other part of the globe; we discover but few of those proofs of the earth having been jumbled into a second chaos by some mighty convulsion. The long chain of hills, called by hunters the Black mountains, and which separate the Missouri from the Arkansas, project others which divide the streams that fall into the Missouri, and even those of the Mississippi; the hills of the white river country, and towards the heads of the Maramek and the St. Francis, so abundant in minerals, are evidently dependencies of those mountains. The ruggid hills, or more properly mountains, about the heads of the Washita, are doubtless branches of the Cordilleras, in which the Red river takes its rise. The Missouri mountains, although on a much larger scale than the Alleghanies, are no where as much elevated as those of South America; the highest point (and which may be considered as the table land of North America) according to Pike, is in latitude 41 degrees; from these immense peaks covered with perennial snows, the greatest rivers of the continent take their rise, to wit, the Colorado of California, a branch of the Columbia, Rio del Norte, the Arkansas, the Platte, the Yellow Stone, and the Missouri.

A remarkable feature in this western side of the great valley, is its deficiency of wood, while the opposite, (with the exception of some parts on the

north side of the Ohio, where the woods have been burnt;) is a close and deep forest. The woods continue for a short distance up the Mississippi before they disappear, and the grassy plains begin. The banks of the Missouri are clothed with luxuriant forest trees for three or four hundred miles, after which, they gradually become bare, and the trees diminish in size; at first we find thin groves of the kind of poplar called cotton wood, but of a diminutive growth, intermixed with willows; next the same tree, reduced to half its height, and resembling an orchard tree; after this, a thin border of shrubbery is almost the only ornament of the margin of the river. The same thing may be said of the Arkansas and Red river.

Taking the distance to the mountains to be about nine hundred miles, of the first two hundred the larger proportion on the Missouri and its waters, is well adapted to agricultural settlements, its soil and conveniences are equal if not superior to those of Tennessee or Illinois; this tract will include the greater part of the White and Osage rivers, the lower Missouri, and for at least one hundred and fifty miles north of this last river. The proportion of wood gradually lessens to the west, and still more to the north, with the addition that the lands become of an inferior quality. For the next three hundred miles, the country will scarcely admit of compact settlements of any great extent; the wooded parts, form trifling exceptions to its general surface, and are never met with but on the margin of the rivers. We may safely lay it down, that after the first two hundred miles, no trees are found on the uplands, save stinted pines or cedars; the rest of the country consists of open plains of vast magnitude, stretching be-

yond the boundary of the eye, and checquered by numerous waving ridges, which enable the traveller to see his long and wearysome journey of several days before him. Yet, it does not seem to me, that the soil of this tract, is any where absolutely unproductive; it is uniformly covered with herbage, though not long and luxuriant like that of the plains nearer the centre of the valley; it is short and close, but more nutricious to the wild herds, than the coarse grass of the common prairie. This tract, has not the dreary barrenness described by Johnson in his tour to the Hebrides; the green carpet which covers, and the beautiful shrubberies which adorn it, afford relief to the eye. But again, it is very doubtful whether trees could be cultivated; for I observed that the trees which by accident are permitted to grow, are but dwarfs; the oak for instance, is not larger than an orchard tree, the plumb is nothing more than a shrub, in some places not exceeding a currant bush. There are, however, scattered over the immense waste, a number of spots which greatly surpass in beauty any thing I have ever seen to the east of the Mississippi. But there are others again, barren in the extreme, producing nothing in the best soil but hysop and the prickly pear. The next four hundred miles, stretching to the mountains, partake of the same character with the last, excepting that it is still more barren and ruggid, more deficient in water, and the spots capable of receiving settlements, so distant from each other, that great difficulties will be encountered by those who may think of living there. An exception is, however to be made in favor of the country about the sources of the principal rivers, which rise in the Missouri mountains; for some distance down these rivers it is much better suited to

settlements than the parts which I have just described; about the heads of the Missouri, the Yellow Stone, the Platte, the Arkansas, &c. settlements might be formed, but unfortunately these are too remote.

I have described the second tract watered by the Missouri, as a specimen of that which lies west of the Mississippi, and south of the north west chain of lakes. The country south of the Arkansas, that on Red river, and the greater part of the province of Texas, have similar features. Thus it appears, that with the exception of a belt of one hundred and fifty, or two hundred miles in width, at most, stretching from the Missouri, in a line parallel with the course of the Mississippi, across the Arkansas, and Red river to the Sabine, about twice the territory of New-York, but not a tenth part of the western section of the valley, the province of Louisiana is little better than a barren waste, and that the eastern side will always contain a much greater population.

From what has been said, it will be seen that the prevailing idea, and with which we have so much flattered ourselves, of these western regions, being like the rest of the United States, susceptible of cultivation, and affording endless outlets to settlements, is certainly erroneous. The nations will continue to wander over those plains, and the wild animals, the elk, the buffaloe, will long be found there; for until our country becomes surcharged with population, there is scarcely any probability of settlers venturing far into these regions. A different mode of life, habits altogether new, would have to be adopted. The settlements would necessarily be strung along the water courses at such distances from each other, that they could not protect themselves from the wander-

ing tribes, at least, they would be much harrassed by them, or they would become wandering tribes themselves. The distance from market, and the difficulties of transportation, would render the agricultural produce, at least some distance west of the Mississippi, of little or no value. Yet, I am convinced, that were it not infested by Indians, there would be many small groups of settlers scattered through it, or the inhabitants like those of the internal provinces of new Spain, might betake themselves altogether to the shepherd life, and drive their herds to the best pasturage and most abundant waters, according to the changes of the seasons. This western region, it is certain, can never become agricultural; but it is in many respects highly favorable for the multiplication of flocks and herds. Those delightful spots where the beauty and variety of the landscape, might challenge the fancy of the poet, invite to the pastoral life. How admirably adapted, to the interesting little animal the sheep, are those clean smooth meadows, of a surface so infinitely varied by hill and dale, covered with a short sweet grass, intermixed with thousands of the most beautiful flowers, undeformed by a single weed.

I confess, that to me, nature never wore an aspect so lovely as on the lonely plains of the west. From their dry and unsheltered surface, no damp and unwholesome vapors rise to lessen the elasticity of the air, or dim the brilliant blue of the heavens. So transparent is the atmosphere, that a slight smoke can be discerned at the distance of many miles, which curiously exercises the caution and sagacity of the fearful savage, ever on the watch to destroy, or to avoid destruction. And then, that sublime immensity which surrounds us; the sea in motion is a sub-

lime object, but not to be compared to the varied scenes which here present themselves, and over which, the body as well as the imagination, is free to expatiate. The beams of the sun, appeared to me, to have less fierceness, or perhaps this might be owing to the cool breezes which continually fan the air, bringing upon their wings the odours of millions of flowers. The mind appears to receive a proportionate elevation, when we are thus lifted up so much higher than the centre of the valley. There was to me something like the fables of fairy land, in passing over a country where for hundreds of miles I saw no inhabitants but the buffaloe, deer, the elk, and antelope: I have called it the PARADISE OF HUNTERS, for to them it is indeed a paradise. There are, however, some important drawbacks on the advantages of this country, even considered as a pastoral district. To the north of the Missouri, rains are extremely rare, but when they are set in, pour down in torrents, while to the south their place is chiefly supplied by heavy dews. In the dry season, which is from the month of June until the latter end of September, at a distance from the great rivers, water is every where exceedingly scarce. The buffaloe at this time, leaves the plain and seeks the rivers, and the Indians in their excursions to any considerable distance, are obliged to shape their courses by some known pond, and to carry besides a quantity of water in bladders. It is possible, that wells might be sunk, but it is certain, that at this season one may travel for days without finding a drop of water; one may frequently pass the beds of large rivers which have disappeared in the sands, but after rains or on the melting of the snows, unpassible torrents are seen to fill their channels, and to roll down in turbid and

frightful floods. Whether the distance of this country from the sea, may be considered as the reason of its not being so well supplied with water, together with the great length of the courses of the rivers, I will leave to be determined by those who have leisure.

Having trespassed thus far on the patience of the reader, I will bring these remarks to a conclusion by noting some particulars of the climate. Spring opens about the last of April, and vegetation is in considerable forwardness by the middle of May. Such fruits as the country affords, principally berries, sand cherries and currants, do not ripen before the latter end of July; I found strawberries about the fourth, near the Mandan villages. Plumbs ripen about the last of August, and vegetation about this time, begins to decay. The winter sets in the beginning of October, but there is frequently frost in August and September. The cold is excessive, during the winter; there are frequent north west storms, which continue for several days, and render it impossible for any but Indians, to stir out without danger of freezing. These observations, apply chiefly to the country on the Missouri and its waters, above latitude 42 degrees, but are, of course, to be taken with considerable allowance as to the more southern latitudes of the Arkansas and Red river. To the plains between these two rivers, the vast herds of buffaloe and deer chiefly retire, during winter; it would otherwise be almost impossible for them to subsist.

A great proportion of the country watered by the Missouri and its branches, appears to have undergone some wonderful change, the causes of which are not easily ascertained; the effects of fire, however, are in many places discernable. I have seen

high banks of clay, burnt almost to the consistency of bricks; near the Poncas village, about nine hundred miles up the river, I saw what is called the tower, a steep hill of one hundred and fifty feet in height, rising almost to a point, and five or six hundred in circumference, which is so hard as to be but little affected by the washing of the rains. Huge masses of pumice, are also found in these places, and frequently in the high bluffs of the river bank. These appearances, have been attributed to the existence of volcanoes on the Missouri, but the absence of every other volcanic appearance, renders it improbable: they are much more likely to be the effects of coal banks continuing a long time on fire. I am well satisfied, that this fossil abounds in every part of the great valley of the Mississippi, above the recent alluvions. Between the Poncas village and the Arkansas, there is a most dreary part of the river, for at least fifty miles, where the bluffs shut in to the waters edge, and wear a black dismal appearance, without the slightest vegetation, as if the surface of the earth had been burnt to a crust. On close examination, this burnt earth appeared to contain from its weight, a portion of some metal, probably iron.

But by far the most remarkable changes in its surface, have been caused by a more gentle element, to wit, by water. Many of the river hills present the appearance of heaps of clay, great quantities of which, on the melting of the snows, and after heavy rains, are precipitated and carried off to the principal stream. This clay, is of a gray color extremely tenacious, being mixed with a large proportion of calcarious earth; the incumbent soil having been first carried away, the rock on which it reposed,

was laid bare to the frost and sun, and perhaps affected by the burning of coal banks, it gradually crumbled and united with the clay. In taking up a handfull, one may pick out gypsum (sulphat of lime) in numerous small fragments. Near these places, we also find an abundance of glaubers salt, (sulphat of soda) together with common salt, oozing with the water out of the ground, and crystalized on the surface. A remarkable fact, which I had frequent occasion to witness, is the appearance on these heaps of clay, of the remains of trees, in a state of petrifaction, and some of enormous size: there are not only numerous fragments scattered about, but the stumps yet standing, to the height of five or six feet, and completely turned to stone. Near the Mandan villages. I traced the trunk and branches of a large tree, a considerable portion of which, had undergone petrifaction where it had fallen; what renders this the more extraordinary, is that even on the richest alluvion the trees are of a very slender growth, and on the upland, the strongest vegetation that any where occurs, is nothing more than some stinted shrubs.

From these facts it would appear, that the Missouri has not always brought down in its channel, that astonishing quantity of earth, which it does at the present day. Other causes, as in Tartary, might operate to prevent the growth of woods in the greater part of the western region; but something of a different kind, must have effected a change in this country, which apparently was once covered with trees. What immense quantities of the earth must have been carried off, to form the great alluvions of the Mississippi, by means of the Arkansas, Red river, and chiefly from the Missouri, not to mention

the vast quantities lost in the gulf of Mexico! The result of a calculation would be curious. The proofs of the loss which this country has sustained, are very evident in the neighborhood of nearly all the rivers which discharge themselves into the Missouri, above the Platte. Some of the appearances where the earth has been thus carried away, may rank among our greatest curiosities. The traveller on entering a plain, is deceived at the first glance, by what appears to be the ruins of some great city; he sees rows of houses stretching for several miles, along apparently regular streets. There seems to be all the symmetry and order of a town built on a magnificent plan, and the occasional deviations from this plan, in imagination represent palaces, temples, or structures standing detached from the rest. These appearances are caused, by the washing away of the earth and less durable substances, while the veins of stone which pervade the mass, continue undecayed, and seem to be walls constructed by human hands. The horizontal strata which mark them, form the different stories, while the detached hills of various sizes and shapes, with their evergeen, creeping junipers, on their tops represent the isolated edifices. The remarkable walls described by Lewis and Clark on the Missouri, have been produced in this way. The description I have just given, was furnished me by hunters, in whom I could place confidence; what I have seen myself, was on a much smaller scale, but was such as to satisfy me, that the account is by no means incredible.

I believe that nearly the whole of the western side of the great valley is calcareous; in this respect resembling the opposite section. There is, however, a fact which appears to me somewhat singular, and

for which I could not so easily account;* on reaching the open country, about six or seven hundred miles up the Missouri, I observed on the river hills large blocks of granite, surrounded by a quantity of pebbles, such as we find in the mountain streams. These continue to be seen until we reach the first range of primitive mountains. I content myself with stating the fact, leaving the solution of the cause to naturalists.

Besides the drawbacks in this western region, from want of wood, of water, and from the badness of the soil every where except in the narrow vallies of the rivers, there are extensive tracts of moving sands similar to those of the African deserts. Mr. Mackey, a Scotch gentlemen, who traversed it about the year 1798, informed me, that he was several days in passing over one of these, towards the mountains, and between the Platte and the Missouri, and where there was not the slightest vegetation excepting the prickly pear.

Amongst the curiosities worthy of being mentioned, are the remarkable salt prairies, near the Arkansas; the following description is given by Mr. Sibley, United States' factor, in the Osage nation; a gentleman of the most amiable character and possessing a fine understanding.

"I hasten to give you a description of this celebrated curiosity. The Grand Saline is situated about 280 miles south west of Fort Osage, between two forks of a small branch of the Arkansas, one of which washes its southern extremity, and the other the principal one, runs nearly parallel within a mile

* Dr. Drake, in his excellent work, the Picture of Cincinnatti has observed the same thing in the state of Ohio.

of its opposite side. It is a hard level plain of a reddish colored sand, and of an irregular or mixed figure; its greatest length is from north west to south east, and its circumference full 30 miles—from the appearance of drift wood that is scattered over, it would seem that the whole plain is at times inundated by the overflowing of the streams that pass near it. This plain is entirely covered in dry hot weather, from two to six inches deep, with a crust of beautiful clean white salt, of a quality rather superior to the imported blown salt; it bears a striking resemblance to a field of brilliant snow after a rain, with a light crust on its top. On a bright sunny morning, the appearance of this natural curiosity is highly picturesque. It possesses the quality of looming or magnifying objects, and this in a very striking degree, making the small billets of wood appear as formidable as trees. Numbers of buffaloes were on the plain. The Saline is environed by a strip of marshy prairie with a few scattering trees, mostly of cotton wood. Behind, there is a range of sand hills, some of which are perfectly naked, others thinly clothed with verdure, and dwarf plum bushes, not more than thirty inches in height, from which we procured abundance of the most delicious plums I ever tasted. The distance to a navigable branch of the Arkansas, about 80 miles, the country tolerably level, and the water courses easily passed.

About 60 miles south west from this, I came to the Saline, the whole of this distance lying over a country remarkably rugged and broken, affording the most romantic and picturesque views imaginable. It is a tract of about 75 miles, in which nature has displayed a great variety of the most strange and whimsical vagaries. It is an assemblage of beauti-

ful meadows, verdant ridges, and rude misshape piles of red clay thrown together in the utmost apparent confusion, yet, affording the most pleasing harmonies, and presenting in every direction an endless variety of curious and interesting objects. After winding along for a few miles on the high ridges, you suddenly descend an almost perpendicular declivity of rocks and clay, into a series of level fertile meadows, watered by some beautiful rivulets, and here and there adorned with shrubby cotton trees, elms and cedars. These meadows are divided by chains formed of red clay, and huge masses of gypsum, with here and there a pyramid of gravel. One might imagine himself surrounded by the ruins of some ancient city, and that the plains had sunk by some convulsion of nature, more than 100 feet below its former level; for some of the huge columns of red clay rise to the height of 200 feet pendicular, capped with rocks of gypsum, which the hand of time is ever crumbling off, and strewing in beautiful transparent flakes along the declivities of the hill, glittering like so many mirrors in the sun."

CHAP. V.

The alluvial tracts on the rivers Mississippi, Missouri, Arkansas, &c.

The most valuable portions of Louisiana consist in the tracts formed by the deposits of the great river, or what is usually called the bottom lands. These alluvions have been formed on a much larger scale, than in any other part of North America, and may be compared to those of the Ganges or the Nile. I propose, in this place, to give an outline of the most considerable, reserving a more minute description for a subsequent part of the work.

The alluvions of the Mississippi, are to be found chiefly on the western side of the stream, which probably proceeds from the circumstance of the numerous and considerable rivers, which flow down the inclined plane on the western side of the valley, and deposit their sediment at their mouths, while at the same time they wear away the eastern bank. This may be nothing more than fancy, but the fact is evident, that the alluvions on the left bank of the Mississippi, are comparatively of small extent. From the mouth of the Ohio to Red river, the valley, or alluvion, is on an average, thirty miles in width: and from the Red river, which may be regarded as the commencement of the delta on the western side, it opens out at once to twice that width. This valley

is confined by what may be termed, as distinguished from the alluvion, the primitive ground; which generally shews itself in abrupt acclivities, called bluffs, sometimes faced with rocks and at others presenting steep precipices of clay, with little or no admixture of stones. The river in its general course, approaches the upland or primitive ground on the eastern side; it washes it in ten or twelve places, and seldom recedes more than a few miles; while on the western side, it approaches the upland but in one place, a few miles below the river St. Francis, and that only within a quarter of a mile: I believe in no place does it afterwards approach nearer than twenty miles.

But a small part of the water which flows from the river, during the floods, ever returns either on the west side, or on the east. Underneath the eastern bluffs, it lies in lagoons or lakes, which appear like so many blotches on the map; on the western side, it either spreads over a vast surface and evaporates, flows into the numerous lakes or reservoirs, or makes itself a channel into the St. Francis, Arkansas, and other western rivers. From the Manchac on one side, and the Red river on the other, the overflowing water is carried off to the sea, by the numerous outlets into the lakes and the gulph: here the primitive ground diverges, having an open space of at least seventy-five miles, curiously checquered by the numerous lakes, natural canals and strips of dry land. The most incontestible proofs exist, that the Mississippi, has at different periods meandered in a thousand channels, still visible, in the valley between the primitive ground on either hand. There are many lakes which exhibit the "counterfeit similitude," of the river, and the ridges of high ground to be met with, once constituted its banks; these ridges, from

the accumulation of vegetable matter, have become even higher than the present banks, and are very rarely inundated. The banks of what are called bayous, (outlets from the river) are generally higher than those of the river, for the same reason; many of them, once formed a part of the principal channel. The following fact will prove, that the changes in the bed of the Mississippi, have in some places been very rapidly made. M. De Touti, in the account which he gives of his first voyage down the Mississippi, in company with La Salle, in the year 1783, says that after passing Red river, (La Subloniere) about ten leagues, they came to a place where the Mississippi was divided into three branches, that they separated into as many parties, and after descending about ten leagues, they found themselves again united by the confluence of the streams.* This was near Point Coupee, and Bayou Tunica, which at the present time, are both closed up and impassible but in the high waters.

To give a clear and satisfactory description, of the low lands which border on the Mississippi, below the mouth of the Ohio, is exceedingly difficult. Some have represented the river as running through a swamp; others tell us, that during the season of floods, it may be considered as a river thirty miles wide, the whole country being under water. It cannot be called a *swamp;* according to the acceptation of the word, that is, an almost irreclaimable morass or marsh; there are certainly very large tracts dur-

* A dix lieues de la, nous remarquames qu'elle se partage en trois cannaux. Je pris celui de la droite, M de la Foret celui de la gauche, and M. de la Salle celui du Milieu. Nous suivimes chacun notre canal, environs dix lieues, et peus de temps apres, nous nous trouvumes reunis par une espece de confluent sur le meme fleuve."

ing the floods completely inundated, particularly below Red river, but when they subside, the land is again left dry. If the reader were to suppose, that the valley or alluvion of the Mississippi, is at those times covered by a continued sheet of water, he would be deceived: but when the flood is at its height, the whole valley or alluvion land, is cut up by natural canals replenished with water, every where in motion, filling the numerous lakes, or making its way to the sea, but leaving almost an equal proportion perfectly dry. Above Red river, the ground is rising every year by the accumulation of vegetable substances, and by the deposition of earthy matter in places subject to annual inundation. This natural operation of reclaiming, goes on more rapidly than one would imagine. After Louisiana was ceded to the United States, several settlements had been formed above Red river, and on the Bayou's west of the Mississippi; these for five or six years were permitted to remain undisturbed by the rising of the waters, and it was not until the high flood of 1811, that the greater part was abandoned; but so great a quantity of sediment was deposited that year, that the ground is supposed to have generally risen six inches.

It is worthy of remark, that the alluvial banks are uniformly highest on the western side; there are many places where the river does not break over them in the highest floods, by twelve or eighteen inches, although the ground is overflowed in the rear, leaving narrow strips of fifty or one hundred yards wide. The settlements on the banks of the river, are chiefly on the western side from the Ohio to Natchez; on the eastern, with but one exception, the only improvements are on the upland.

The circumstance of the immediate borders of the river being the highest part of the alluvion, has given rise to many curious theories to account for its thus *running on a ridge.* But this is a circumstance by no means peculiar to the Missisippi, and may be explained by obvious causes. If we examine attentively, we shall see, that the alluvion of the most trifling rivulet, will be higher on the bank than at some distance from it; to account for it, it is sufficient to suggest, that in every inundation the grosser and more weighty matter brought down by the stream, would be first deposited, and the more light at a greater distance, and the last. Besides, the vegetable accumulations would also be greater, as on the margin of the stream vegetation is always most luxuriant.

Above the mouth of the Ohio the alluvion gradually becomes more narrow, until it is contracted to the width of five or six miles at the American bottom, beginning at Kaskaskia. The highlands or bluffs, are uniformly on the western side to the mouth of the Missouri, but instead of clay banks, they are faced with limestone, rising in some places to precipices two hundred feet high and crowned with oak or cedars. The proportion of land subject to inundation is very small, and there are not many outlets; but there still exist shallow lakes, scattered through the bottoms, some of which, much resemble the channel of the river, but the greater part are nothing more than ponds or lagoons.

It has been suggested by an ingenious French gentleman, M. Peyroux, that there was formerly an outlet from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi, through the Illinois. This is supported by the well known facts, that the water of nearly all the lakes which flow into the St. Lawrence, has sunk several feet,

and the evident marks in the present channel of the Illinois, of having once contained a stream of much greater magnitude. This opinion might be strengthened by other facts within my own observation. The bluff which terminates the alluvion on the eastern side of the Mississippi, below the Illinois, at present distant several miles from the river, shews itself in a number of places in bare precipices of limestone rock, with evident marks of having been worn by the waters, at least ten feet above the highest floods. The same thing may be observed on the western side. Can it be that the river was once five or six miles wide at this place, or has there been a lake which by some means or other, has been drained? The last idea suggested itself to me, on examining a remarkable place on the river, eight or ten miles above Cape Girardeau, called the Grand Tower, which, although but little known, deserves the attention of the curious. The rocky bluffs on the western side are washed by the stream, and on the eastern the bottom at their base is not more than a few hundred yards wide; the hills or bluffs appear to converge in an unusual manner, and from the appearance of the huge fragments of rocks, forming almost a continued chain across, there is strong reason for conjecture, that here was once a cataract. The tower is one of the fragments, and rises from the water about fifty feet in height, and about sixty yards from the western bank, which is a steep rock; its form is nearly circular, with a bouquet of cedars on the top. On the opposite side of the river, there is another huge detached rock, but round which, the water does not flow excepting in the season of floods; it has a remarkable unexplored cavern, which the Americans call the Devil's Oven. Between this and

the bluff, there are several other fragments continuing the chain, through which the Mississippi, by the aid of time, or by some convulsion of nature, has found a passage. There are few places on the river of more dangerous and difficult navigation, both to persons ascending and descending. Between this and the mouth of the Ohio, there are to be seen in various places, detached rocks on the shore, and on the heads of islands, evidently rolled down by some mighty and unusual current.

The valley of the Mississippi above the Missouri and the Illinois, undergoes a wonderful change, it ceases to be more subject to inundation than the borders of the Ohio, and it is contracted in breadth to two or three miles. As far as the falls of St. Anthony, the soil is excellent, and nothing can exceed the variety and beauty of the landscape. But it is unfortunately deficient in wood, particularly on the upland ; the continued succession of rich meadows, and sloping hills, are delightful to the eye, although in an agricultural point of view, it is by no means to be compared to the borders of the Ohio, or of the Missouri.

The valley of this last river, is becoming every day of more importance, and is the quarter to which western emigration at this moment chiefly turns. The course of the Missouri, being nearly west for at least six hundred miles, it will have a preference to the Mississippi in point of climate. For at least two hundred miles, the alluvion valley may be estimated at five miles wide, though in some places ten, and covered with a heavy forest; but the upland is nearly one half prairie. As on the Ohio, the bottom land appears alternately on one side or on the other; the uplands or bluffs seldom rocky, and sloping with

gentle acclivities to the water's edge. In some places, however, for a considerable distance, the river takes its course through the deep and level forests in the middle of the valley. From the Kansas river the forest begins to grow more thin, and we often see a grassy plain stretching from the brink of the river, while the upland is either entirely without trees or produces only stinted oaks. At the river Platte, the open plains may be said to begin, and generally there is not more than one half of the river border covered with woods, while the uplands have nothing but short grass. Still the banks of the river are sufficiently wooded to admit of settlement; but unfortunately, from this point the river bottoms are much more subject to inundation than below. I am convinced that a compact settlement might be formed for about nine hundred miles, but that afterwards the settlements would be interrupted sometimes for fifty miles, although there are many extensive tracts on the river to its very source, of a rich soil and capable of being settled. Nothing can surpass the beauty of the country from the Chyenne river to the Mandans, the distance of three hundred miles, every mile almost may be inhabited, and the islands are delightful. This part of the river, was once extremely populous, as may be seen by the number of Indian ruins. There are many situations at the entrance of the large rivers of the Missouri, favorable for towns or villages; such as the Yellow Stone, the White river, the Chyenne, the Sioux, the Jaque, Platte, the Kansas, Osage, &c.; the country in the vicinity is uniformly delightful.

The valley of the Arkansas, is wider than that of the Missouri, but is almost bare of wood, and is more liable to inundation. This river is in fact bor-

dered by immense grassy plains nearly its whole length, which will oppose a great obstacle to its settlement. The valley of Red river, beyond the boundary of the state of Louisiana, is said to afford a fine tract of land, and with much more wood than that of the Arkansas.

CHAP. VI.

Lakes and Rivers.

Over the wide spread surface of Louisiana, so small a portion of which is occupied by barren sands, many navigable streams must necessarily flow; perhaps there are not less than two hundred of equal size with the Thames or the Schuylkill: and yet the western side of the great valley of the Mississippi, is far from being as well watered as the eastern. Springs are less abundant, and the rivers depend chiefly for their supply on rains, and on the melting of the snows. It is a remark which applies to nearly all the larger rivers on the western side of the Mississippi, which take their rise in the great mountains, where springs are more numerous, and the streams clear and limpid, that while they flow through the mountainous country, they possess deep and clear channels, and are of easy navigation, but on entering the lower country, spread out, become broad and shallow, even cease to be navigable for a long distance. The Missouri and Mississippi, are perhaps the only exceptions. But those which rise short of the primitive mountains are navigable with scarcely any interruption to their sources, which are often in lakes.

In upper Louisiana there are but few lakes except those near the heads of the Mississippi. The

Lake of the Woods, the lesser Winipec, Leech lake, Red Cedar lake (supposed to be the source of the Mississippi) lake De Sable, &c. are the most considerable of these. There are several lakes between the Missouri, and the north west chain, but the country is yet but little known. It is supposed that lake Winepec, perhaps the largest of all those inland seas, comes within the territory of the United States.—Even if in our limits of Louisiana we should be bounded by a line due west, from that one which terminates the line of the United States, it is probable that the source of the Mississippi is further north than the southern side of lake Winipec. This lake receives a number of very considerable rivers, and is discharged into Hudson's Bay by Nelson's river; it is connected with other lakes to the northwest, and has from the rivers emptying into it, an inconsiderable portage to the waters of lake Superior.

In lower Louisiana, there are a great number of lakes from the refluent waters of the Mississippi, and from the upland streams which lose themselves in the level. There will be enumerated and more particularly described, in the account of the state of Louisiana, as also the lakes Ponchartrain and Maurepas, on the east side of the Mississippi: which although usually known under the name of lakes, might with more propriety be considered as bays, as they are immediately connected with the sea.

I have continued the following table in order to present to the reader at one glance, the names and comparative importance of the principal rivers. Many have been necessarily omitted, considering it better to refer those who are desirous of a very minute account of the country to the map of Mr. Mel-

lish, who has combined all the latest discoveries. I also subjoin general observations on the larger rivers, but of the smaller I shall give an account in the second and third books.

TABLE OF NAVIGABLE RIVERS IN LOUISIANA—DISTANCE OF NAVIGATION.

Principal R.	*Tributaries.*	*Navi.*	*Remarks.*
MISSISSIPPI.....		3,000	
	Sang Sue . . .	80	By some considered the
	Pike R.	120	source of the Missip. heads
	des Corbeaux .	300	in Leech lake, and is larger
	St. Peters . .	1,000	than the branch which rises
	Turkey R. . .		in Red Cedar lake; consi-
	Catfish R. . .		dered the source of the a-
			bove mentioned river.
	des Moines. .	800	About 250 miles above
	Wayaconda .		the mouth of the Missouri,
	Jauffione . . .		not much known.
	Salt R.		
	Buffaloe . . .		
	Cuivre	150	
	Missouri . . .	3,096	
	Maramek. . .	350	
	St. Francis .	800	
	White R. . . .	1,100	
	Arkansas . . .	2,000	
	Red R.	2,500	
LES CORBEAUX.		15,296	
	Leaf R. . . .	180	There is a portage of one
ST. PETERS.....			mile from the head of this
	Blue Earth R.		river to the Otter Tail lake,
	Red Wood R.		the principal source of Red
DES MOINES.....	Yellow WoodR		river of Winipec.
	Rackoon R.		
	Red Cedar R.		
MISSOURI.....	Gasconade . .	100	S. W. side
	Mine R. . . .	40	id.
	G. Osage . . .	600	id.
	1 Charatans .	50	id.
	2 Charatans .	100	N. E. side

Principal R.	*Tributaries.*	*Navi.*	*Remarks.*
	Grand R. . . .	600	N. E. side
	Kansas	1,200	S. W. side
	Little R. Platte	40	N. E. side
	Nodawa . . .	60	N. E. side
	Platte		S. W. upwards of 2,000
	Floyd's River		miles in length, but affords
	Big Sioux . .	200	little or no navigation.
	White Stone .		
	River a'Jaque	300	N. E. A point of rendezvous for the traders, and the Yankton band of Sioux.
	Qui Courre .		S. W. A handsome river but not navigable any great distance.
	Poncas		S. W.
	White River .	500	S. W. A large fine river; its branches not known, 300 yards at its mouth.
	Tylers River .		
	Chienne River	600	S. W. Not better known than White river; 400 yds. wide at its mouth.
	Ser-war-ser-na		S. W. side.
	Win-i-pen-hu		S. W.
	Cannon-ball R.		S. W. 140 yards wide.
	Knife River .		S. W. Near the Mandan villages.
	Little Missouri		S. W. 134 yards wide, but not navigable.
	Goose River .		N. E. 300 yards wide.
	White Earth R		N. E.
	Yellow Stone .		S. W. 855 yards wide at its mouth; a very large river, equal in length to the Platte; affords much better navigation, but is astonishingly rapid.
	Porcupine R.		N. E. 112 yards wide.
	Dry R.		S. W. 100 do.
	Big Dry R. . .		S. W. 400 do.
	Muscle Shell R		S. W. 100 do.
	Big Horne . .		S. W. 100 do.
	Manoles . . .		S. W. 100 do.
	Fancy River .		S. W. 180 do.

Principal R.	*Tributaries.*	*Navi.*	*Remarks.*
	Dearborne . .		
	Maria		N. E. At this place the Missouri is observed to take nearly all its turbidness.
	Jefferson Fork	96	
	Madison . . .	80	
	Gallatin . . .	60	
YEL. STONE.....	Big Horne . .		
	Tongue River		
	Clark's River		
	Lewis's River		
MARAMEK.....	Big River . .	150	
ST. FRANCIS.....	Western Bran.	150	This river is not perfectly known.
	Penusco . . .	50	
WHITE RIVER...	Aux Cashe . .	80	
	Black River .	400	
	James River .	150	
	Rapid John .	100	
	Red River . .	300	
ARKANSAS.....	Verdigris . .	200	
	Nagraca . . .	150	
	Canadian River	100	
	Grand River .	200	
	Grand Saline .		
	Strong Saline		
RED RIVER.....	*Black River* .	50	This river is formed by the junction of the Tensa, Washita and Little river—There are numerous navigable bayoux and streams from Red river, and several considerable branches yet but little known.
GREAT OSAGE....	Nangira . . .		
	Grand River .		
	The Fork . .		
	Cook's River		
	Vermillion R.		
KANSAS.....	Smokey hill F.		These rivers are navigable from 150 to 300 miles
	Grand Saline		
	Solomon's F.		
	Republican do.		
PLATTE.....	Elk-horn . . .	400	
	Wolf River .	600	Heads in a lake.

Principal R.	*Tributaries.*	*Navi.*	*Remarks.*
	Padoucas . .		
BLACK R. (W.)	Spring River .	50	Rises in a lake, and is navigable from the very source.
	Current . . .		
	Eleven		
BLACK R. (M.)	Washita . . .	1,000	
	Riviere au Bœf	400	This is a long river which flows between the Mississippi and Washita, and said to communicate with the St. Francis, by means of a lake, with which the waters of that river are connected.
	Tensa	150	
	Catahoula . .	50	
	Little River .	100	
RED RIVER..... of Winipec.	Little Missouri		
	Assineboin . .		
	Saskashawin		
TECHE,.....		150	Called a bayoux, but more properly a river.
SABINE.....		400	
Chaffallaya.		300	A continuation of Red riv.

THE MISSISSIPPI.

To say every thing of this noble river, which writers have deemed worthy of notice, would far exceed the bounds to which I am confined. Besides, it is so well known from the writings of many intelligent persons, that by entering into such detail, my task would be little more than that of compilation. The Mississippi (or Mitchasippi, the father of streams) justly ranks amongst the most magnificent rivers in the world: whether we consider its magnitude, the astonishing number and consequence of its tributary rivers, or the amazing scope of fertile land which it traverses; watering at least a fourth of the habitable part of North America. The comparison to the Nile not unfrequently made, is far from giving just conceptions of its magnitude and importance. It is only with the equally noble and vast rivers of the New World, it can be properly assimilated. It differs from these in one particular; instead of a channel proportioned to its extent and

magnitude, it gives its tribute to the ocean by innumerable outlets and natural canals. The *Delta* of this river is said to extend several degrees of longitude, the whole formed with earth brought down by the stream. Perhaps at one period of the world, this river gave its waters to the great reservoir with as much majesty as the Amazon, or La Platta, but the Mississippi may challenge any of those rivers for the extent of its navigation and the quantity of habitable and fertile soil on his border, and on the borders of his "thousand sons."

There can be no doubt but that the Missouri is the true continuation of the Mississippi. After the confluence of these two rivers, the latter assumes the appearance and peculiarity of the former in almost every particular. The colour of their waters can be distinguished, however, for thirty miles before that of the Missouri entirely prevails, but in the alluvia, the sand bars, islands, rafts, currents, and the appearance of the woods on its borders, the Missouri still continues. The Missouri brings into the channel four times as much water as the Mississippi; in point of length it is at least double, and even several of its principal branches are even longer.

Above the Missouri, the Mississippi is clear and limpid, like the Ohio, and bordered by a country extremely beautiful, with many fertile spots, but is not to be compared to that on the Ohio as adapted to settlements. The greater part consists of naked plains, which promise little to the husbandman. Excepting the cataracts of St. Anthony, this river has but one or two serious interruptions in the navigation for at least sixteen hundred miles above St. Louis: but its channel generally abounds with shoals, and sand bars, the current, however, gentle.

It is not an easy matter to point out exactly its source, several of the branches into which it divides near its head, might claim this honour. It does not take its rise in a mountainous country, and yet it must be of considerable height, from the number of important rivers which flow from the same neighbourhood. The country abounds in lakes and extensive marshes, among which the Mississippi takes its rise. A narrow ridge of high land separates it from the waters of lake Winipec. Red Cedar lake, situated in lat. 47 deg. 38 min. is considered by Pike as its source, this is but a few miles from Red lake, in which Red river takes its rise; here is therefore an easy communication with the waters which discharge themselves into Hudson's bay.

In descending this river but little variety is observed. Entering from the Missouri, we find ourselves in a more spacious river: in places where large islands divide the current, it spreads to a great width, sometimes of several miles; yet when this is not the case, the channel of the river is but little wider than at the Mandan villages, though at that place it is only filled in the season of high water. The navigation is considered dangerous from the Missouri to the mouth of the Ohio, on account of the great number of sawyers and rafts. Below this fine river, no perceptible difference takes place in point of magnitude, and from the St. Francis to Red river, the general width scarcely exceeds that of the Missouri. At Point Coupee it assumes a more majestic appearance, and from this place continues a course, uninterrupted by islands and sand bars, with a current gradually diminishing.

Its border scenery is disagreeably uniform. The banks are covered with cotton wood trees, of enor-

mous size, the tops apparently level as if made so by design. Scarcely any other tree grows on the island. Below the mouth of the Ohio, the cypress makes its appearance in the bends, where the ground is lower than on the points, and subject to be overflown. The *arundo gigantia*, appears about the same place, on the spots of ground least subject to inundation. It grows to the height of twenty feet, forming an impervious thicket. The long moss, or Spanish beard begins to be seen below the Arkansas, and gives a gloomy appearance to the woods. The falling in of the banks is amongst the most remarkable features of this river; sometimes whole acres with the trees growing on them are precipitated into the stream, creating frightful impediments to the navigation, and not unfrequently overwhelming boats moored near the shore. In time, the trees thus fallen in, become sawyers and planters; the first so named from the motion made by the top when acted upon by the current, the others are the trunk of trees of sufficient size to resist it. There are also frequently seen at the heads of islands, immense collections of drift wood, piled up to a great height, thrown confusedly together and closely matted; here are found, boats, canoes, planks, and a great variety of timber, brought down by the rivers of a hundred climates and soils, and heaped together in chaos. These are amongst the most dangerous places in the course of the navigation* The current rushes towards them with amazing velocity, and it is with great difficulty and

* For a more minute account of the difficulties of the navigation, and for many interesting details, I refer the reader to the Ohio and Mississippi Navigator.

the exertion of skill, that they are avoided. It is therefore dangerous to float after night.

The Mississippi is remarkable for the muddiness of its waters, a quality altogether derived from the Missouri, but is less turbid than that river; the waters above the junction, being clear, the accession of the Illinois, Ohio, and other clear streams tending also to render it more limpid than the Missouri. It is not from the falling in of the banks, as is supposed, that this muddiness proceeds; this is scarcely sufficient to supply what is deposited by the river on sand bars, islands, &c. between the upper Missouri, (from whence the earth forming it is carried) and the mouth of the river.

There is a surprising difference in the navigation of this truly noble river, in the ordinary stages of the water and during the continuance of the floods. There have been instances of persons descending from St. Louis to New-Orleans, in ten days; the distance, however, is much shortened by being able to cut off points, and to go through channels impracticable in low water. The usual time in low water is from four to six weeks. In ascending, fifty days to the mouth of the Ohio is considered a good voyage, but two months is the most usual time; oars and poles are always used for the purpose of navigating the boats, but the cordelle, and sails, are also of great importance. In the course of a voyage it is rare that there are not six or eight days of sailing, which is a great relief to the hands, as the boat is then propelled against the current without their assistance, sometimes, thirty miles a day. In very light winds, the sails are hoisted and although not sufficient alone to cause the boat to descend, yet afford considerable help. The boats usually employ-

ed are from ten to thirty tons burthen; as high as Natchez, schooners of fifty tons often ascend. There are, besides, between the places just mentioned, a kind of boat of a peculiar construction, much in use, and carrying often eight or ten tons: they appear to be formed of a single tree, but in reality out of three of the largest size; two are hollowed in such a manner as to form the sides, and a third for the bottom: they are then joined together so as to make a very durable and strong boat, easily managed, and the most safe against hurricanes and violent winds.

The Mississippi carries generally fifteen feet water from the mouth of the Missouri to the Ohio, from thence to Red river, it seems to increase in depth: at this place it has as many fathoms, and at New-Orleans not less than forty. On the bar, there are usually from twelve to fourteen feet, although the water rises at the mouth of the Ohio fifty feet, and but little diminution is experienced before we pass Natchez; at Baton Rouge it is not more than twenty-five feet, at New-Orleans only fifteen, and at the mouth of the river is scarcely perceptible.

The floods of the Mississippi usually begin in April; commencing with the first flood of the Missouri, which is usually in March, on the breaking up of the ice; this is followed by the Mississippi above the junction, afterwards by the Ohio, and other rivers. The great flood of the Missouri begins in June, shortly after which those of the Mississippi, in consequence attain their greatest height. It subsides in August. A very unusual occurrence took place this winter (1812) in the month of December, the river rose to within two or three feet of the highest water, and continued to be high until the

latter end of the month. The oldest inhabitants had never witnessed any thing of the kind.

MISSOURI.

This magnificent river, the greatest of North America, and one of the largest on the globe, from the ignorance of the first explorers and from the inveteracy of habit, has only been assigned the first rank among those which swell the Mississippi. I never can forget the feelings with which I beheld it for the first time; with what astonishment I gazed upon the awful velocity of its rolling current, with its turbid ash-colored waters; and it was not without some involuntary hesitation I ventured to trust myself on its mighty flood. The objects which every where met my eye, the loose and crumbling banks, the large trunks of trees covered with slime and mud, fixed in the sides of the bank like *cheveaux de frize*, and the rude and chaotic appearance of the scenery, produced sensations by no means agreeable.

It enters the Mississippi nearly at right angles in latitude 38 degrees 55 minutes; the confluence is by no means comparable to that of the Ohio, principally owing to an island at the entrance. The course of the river in ascending is little north of west to the Platte. Above this, its course is nearly north west, until we reach the Mandan villages, in latitude 46. From this point the distance to the Mississippi is less than from the Platte. From the northernmost part of the great bend, above the Mandans, and in latitude 47 degrees, we ascend nearly west; the course of the three forks, Jefferson, Madison, and Gallatin, is nearly south west and south.

The current of this river is at least a fourth greater than that of the Mississippi. To the Platte, it is amazingly swift, and stemmed with great difficulty, abounding with shoals and sand bars, sawyers, rafts projecting from the shore, and islands. It is almost impracticable to descend in flat-bottomed boats, even in the highest stages of the water: in barges great care and dexterity are requisite. It is far from being agreeable in appearance, unless we consider the pleasure derived from contemplating its wonderful swiftness and force. Above the Platte, the Missouri, though not less swift in current, is rendered more easy of navigation by the large sand bars, and clear banks, which admit of towing: but from the scarcity of wood of a proper kind, it is necessary to lay in a sufficient stock of oars and poles. To the falls, two thousand miles further, it preserves the same character; the navigation, however, becomes less dangerous, or difficult, excepting from the shoals, which in low water are abundant. Above the falls or cataracts, there is a clear fine river five hundred miles to the three forks, affording better navigation than any part of the Missouri, although the channel is generally narrow and sometimes confined between lofty mountains. The three forks are all fine rivers, and receive a great number of smaller streams. In ascending the Missouri, sails are of more importance than on any of the western rivers. The openness of the country gives scope to the winds, which in the spring and summer usually blow from the south east and suit the general course of the river: I frequently ascended, notwithstanding the swiftness of the current, from thirty to forty miles per day for three or four days in succession.

The course of this mighty river is exceedingly irregular; in many places it pursues a zigzag course for forty miles, sometimes as if returning upon its steps. Some of its larger sinuosities take in an amazing sweep. It receives all its principal rivers from the south west side. The extent of country to be drained on the north east side is to the other, as the east side of the Mississippi is to the western. This is owing to the vicinity of the Mississippi, and the north west chain of lakes. The distance from the Mandan villages to the British establishment on the Red river of Winipec, is but a few days journey.

The floods of this river usually begin early in March, and there is a continued succession of them until the last of July; the river subsiding and again rising as the different rivers bring down their annual tributes. It so happens, that seldom more than two great rivers are high at the same period. Many of these floods are never felt in the Mississippi. But the great rise of the Missouri itself, from the melting of the snows, takes place about the tenth of June, and begins to subside about the latter end of July. In some of the northern branches, the ice does not break up until late in the season: about one thousand miles up the Missouri, I saw a large cake of ice floating in the river on the last of May.

There is little variation in the width of this river from its mouth to the cataracts. In some places it spreads considerably, and in these, sand bars impede the navigation in low water: at such times the river is reduced in places to less than a fourth of its usual width, between sand bars which advance into it and a high bank. But when the channel is full, even at the Mandans, it appeared to me not less broad or majestic, than does the Mississippi at New-Orleans.

The whole length of the navigation of the Missouri from the highest point of Jefferson river, the largest of the three forks, to its entrance into the Mississippi, is three thousand and ninety-six miles. Such a navigation is possessed by no other tributary stream in the world. No insurmountable obstacle occurs for two thousand five hundred miles, when we reach the great falls or cataracts, next to those of the Niagara the most stupendous in America. In point of variety, magnificence, and beauty they are perhaps unequalled by any in the world. It may more properly be called a chain of cascades and cataracts of various figures and magnitudes, composed of at least forty or fifty in number, in the distance of eighteen miles, descending from one ledge of rock to another, in the whole three hundred and sixty feet. Before they begin, the river presents a wide and calm expance of fourteen hundred yards covered with wild fowl, its waters like those of a lake preserving an uniform height and kissing the bordering grass of the romantic meadows which stretch on either side. Suddenly it is compressed to the width of three hundred yards, and after foaming and wheeling among the rocks, it dashes over a precipice of twenty-six feet. It then successively tumbles over ledges of rocks of four, six, ten, fourteen feet in height, and again leaps down a height of fifty feet in one unbroken street nearly a quarter of a mile in width, and forming the most regular and beautiful cascade in the world. There are after this, ten distinct successive pitches from four to twenty feet, before it reaches the principal cataract, when it thunders down from a perpendicular elevation of ninety feet. By this time, the waters thus vexed and bruised, appear at the bottom of the nine successive cas-

cades over which they are next precipitated, in immense masses of foam, while the light spray which rises aloft emprismed by the sun produced the most brilliant appearance. The surrounding scenery is the corresponding immensity of the Missouri desert; boundless plains stretching beyond the boundary of vision; rugged hills piled upon them, and a distant glimpse of the snow capped mountains which separate the waters of the Atlantic from those of the Pacific ocean. This sublime spectacle, until the voyage of Lewis and Clark had lavished its magnificence on the desert unknown to civilization.

ARKANSAS.

The Arkansas, next to the Missouri, is the most considerable tributary of the Mississippi. In length it is nearly two thousand five hundred miles, and navigable at proper seasons nearly the whole distance. In many places its channel is broad and shallow, at least above the rapids, so as to render navigation almost impracticable. Until eight or nine hundred miles from its mouth, it receives no considerable streams, owing to the vicinity of the waters of the Missouri, of the Kansas, &c. on the one side, and those of Red river on the other. The chief rivers which fall into it, are the Verdigris, the Negraca, Canadian river, Grand river, &c. Several are remarkable for being strongly impregnated with salt; the Arkansas itself, at certain seasons is said to be brackish.

The lands on this river for six or eight hundred miles up, are described as very fine and capable of affording settlements, though principally untimbered. For a long distance up, the flat lands on either side are intersected with numerous bayous.—There

is a remarkable communication between the Arkansas and White river, by a channel or bayou connecting the two rivers with a current setting alternately into the one or the other, as the flood in either happens to predominate.

RED RIVER.

Takes its source in the Cordilleras, at no great distance north of Santa Fee. In length it is about the same with the Arkansas. It is navigable four hundred miles, with no insurmountable obstruction. There is a curious raft, formed of logs and earth, which entirely covers its channel; trees are growing upon it, and one might pass over without perceiving the river. Red river runs in a valley on an average fifteen miles wide, for at least five hundred miles, which is every where intersected with bayou, and large lakes. The navigation meets with the first impediment one hundred and fifty miles. The falls or rapids are about two miles in length, the breadth of the river two hundred and fifty yards. They are occasioned by a soft rock of free stone: the greatest pitch in low water, not being more than eight or nine inches. This river might with much more justice than the Mississippi, be called the American Nile. A country lies on its borders more extensive than Egypt, and of a soil the richest perhaps in the world. Its waters, which are not potable, are very red, impregnated with some mineral. The river is remarkably narrow; it seldom spreads to the width of two hundred and fifty yards, and is more generally contracted to one hundred; it is also exceedingly crooked. The annual swell, which is early in the spring of the year, raises the water fifty or sixty feet, when it flows with great rapidity: but

during the summer and season of low water, it is sunk within deep and ragged clay banks, of an unsightly appearance, and has not more than eight or ten feet of water. The outlets from this river are more numerous than even from the Mississippi, and joined by streams which flow from the uplands, or pine woods. The course of the river is constantly subject to change; many of the bayou which at present appear inconsiderable, at no distant period constituted the bed of the principal river.

R. DES CORBEAUX,

The western branch of the Mississippi, and affording the best communication with Red river of Winipec. This river is ascended one hundred and eighty miles to the Leaf river, which enters from the north west; the Leaf river is again ascended the same distance; there is then a postage of one half mile to the Otter Tail lake, the principal source of Red river. The other branch of the riviere des Corbeaux, bears south west and approaches the St. Peters.

ST. PETERS,

Enters the Mississippi about forty miles below the falls of St. Anthony. It is a fine stream, and may be navigated to its source, a thousand miles; the current is gentle, and in places scarcely perceptible; in the spring and summer it is covered with wild fowl, which collect here for the purpose of breeding, and find abundant nourishment in the wild rice which grows in the river and neighboring lakes. Its principal branches are, Blue Earth river, Red Wood river, and Yellow Wood river.

DES MOINES.

Next to the St. Peters, it is the largest of the rivers which the Mississippi receives from the west,

above the confluence with the Missouri. It enters two hundred and fifty miles from their junction, and is navigable without a fall or scarcely an interruption, to the Pelican lake, where it rises, and which is not far from the Sioux river of the Missouri, a distance of about eight hundred miles. Raccoon river, the principal branch enters on the south west side, and is navigable several hundred miles. There are several others of some magnitude, particularly the Red Cedar river.

GRAND RIVER,

Enters the Missouri on the north east side, about 250 miles up; a fine river, navigable six hundred miles; general course not distant from the Missouri. Formerly, when the traders bound for the Mahas, (800 miles up the Missouri) were infested by the Kansas Indians, they ascended this river, and then crossed to the Missouri.

KANSAS,

Rises in the vast plains between the Arkansas and the Platte. It is one of the finest rivers of the Missouri, though inferior to several of them in length. The principal branches are the Smoky Hill fork, Grand Saline, Solomon's Fork, and the Republican Fork. It enters the Missouri 300 miles up. I have conversed with hunters who had ascended it, without meeting any considerable obstacles, more than three hundred leagues. It receives a great number of large streams, and is by no means well known. The adjacent country is generally prairie, and the cliffs on the river, are frequently solid rocks of gypsum.

THE PLATTE,

Is the longest and largest of the rivers which discharge themselves into the Missouri, being little short of two thousand miles, and yet can hardly be reckoned a navigable stream. The channel is extremely wide and abounds with ever varying quicksands. Several fine navigable rivers, however, discharge themselves into it; the Elk Horn, and the Wolf river, and the Padoucas Fork.

THE YELLOW STONE (OR ROCHE JAUNE,)

Has considerable resemblance to the Missouri in size and difficulty of navigation, and is the most considerable of those rivers which discharge themselves into it. The Missouri undergoes a perceptible change after the junction. In seasons of high water it is more properly a torrent; the descriptions of its rapidity are almost incredible. It enters the Missouri 1880 miles up. The principal branches are, Big Horn, Tongue River, and Clark's river.

WHITE R.—SHAYENNE R.—R. A. JAGUE—SIOUX R.

These might be ranked amongst the most considerable rivers any where but in the valley of the Mississippi. There are besides many others which I cannot notice without swelling this account beyond all usual limits. The *Little Missouri* (ninety miles above the Mandan villages) is remarkable for the quantity of earth which it carries to the river. At the *Maria river*, a large stream which enters the river two thousand miles up, the muddiness of the Missouri in a great measure ceases.

There are several considerable rivers, between the Missouri and the north west lakes. *Red river* is the principal; the *Assiniboin*, is its largest branch.

The *Mouse river*, or Saskashawin, is remarkable for taking its rise from the bank of the Missouri.

The rivers of the province of Texas most worthy of note, are the *Trinity*, the *Gaudaloupe*, the *Brassas de Deos*, and the *San Antonia*. These are long and narrow rivers rising in the Cordilleras, and afford much fine land on their borders.

CHAP. VII.

Natural or indigenous productions—animal, vegetable and mineral.

Not being a naturalist, I shall only attempt to give some idea of the extensive field which lies open to the learned. Were I to attempt, upon a slender knowledge, to give a scientific account, I might lead the reader into error.

I am informed that the western side of the Mississippi, to the eye of the naturalist, has a character altogether different from any part of the United States, and that except New Holland, the world does not afford a more interesting field.

Mr. Bradbury has made a very fine collection of specimens, and some very interesting discoveries. The indefatigable research of this gentleman, and that heart-engaged enthusiasm, which the student of the great book of nature, has ever been observed to possess, promise a valuable acquisition to pleasurable and useful knowledge. The discoveries of Lewis and Clark, even in this department, are said to be very important; but, from the expedition necessary in the movements of the exploring parties, and the necessity of a continual watch, for their own safety, they could not possess the opportunity and leisure, necessary for the examination of objects more minute.

The forest trees, and plants and animals, described by Mr Jefferson, and other writers, are found in some part or other of this territory; but there is also a great variety, peculiar to itself. The subject of its mineralogy remains untouched. Mr. Bradbury has discovered nearly one hundred and fifty *non-descript* plants; near twenty of which, cannot be assigned to any known genera, and may therefore be considered as forming new ones. His discoveries with respect to the animal part of the creation, and the subterraneous riches of the country, are not less important.

ANIMALS.

Agreeably to what I have already said, I shall not attempt to give a catalogue of the animals, plants, &c. but merely notice those most remarkable.

The Grizzly Bear—First claims our attention. This animal, is the monarch of the country which he inhabits. The African lion, or the tyger of Bengal, is not more terrible or fierce. He is the enemy of man; and literally thirsts for human blood. So far from shunning, he seldom fails to attack; and even to *hunt* him. I am credibly informed that he has been known to pursue the track of a hunter an hour after his having passed. The Indians make war upon these ferocious monsters, with the same ceremonies, as they do upon a tribe of their own species: and in the recital of their victories, the death of one of them, gives the warrior greater renown than the scalp of a human enemy.

The Grizzly Bear, is a *non-descript*, and much the largest of the species. He is twice the size of a common brown bear, and four times that of the Eu-

ropean. One, killed by Lewis and Clark, near the Porcupine river, about two thousand miles up the Missouri, measured as follows:

Round the head	3 feet 5 inches
Round the neck	3 feet 11 inches
Length	8 feet 7½ inches
Round the fore leg	1 foot 11 inches
Talons—in length	4 3-8 inches

Mr. Manuel Lisa, the first who ascended to this country for the purpose of trade, and who spent nine months in it, informed me that they sometimes exceed 1,000. When full grown, commonly weigh six or eight hundred. He possesses an amazing strength, and attacks without hesitation and tears to pieces the largest buffaloe. The color, is usually such as the name indicates, though there are varieties, from black to silvery whiteness. The skins are highly valued for muffs and tippets; and will bring from twenty to fifty dollars each.

These bears are not usually seen lower than the Mandan villages. In the vicinity of the Roche Jaune, and of Little Missouri, they are said to be most numerous. They do not wander much in the prairies, but are usually found in points of wood, in the neighbourhood of large streams. The Indians hardly ever venture into the fringe of wood, which borders the rivers, in that vast tract of open country, without first setting up a loud and continued shout, in order that the bears, if there be any, may either come forth to attack them, or retire, if they happen not to be so disposed.

In shape, he differs from the common bear in being proportionably more long and lank. He does not climb trees, a circumstance which has enabled hunters with whom I am acquainted, to make their

escape. The Indians complain that some of their best warriors, have fallen victims to this animal. Lewis and Clark's men, on several occasions, narrowly escaped from their attacks. The grizzly bear is sufficient to disprove, the idle theories of Buffon or Raynal, as to the impotency of the NEW WORLD in the production of animals.

Antelope, was thought to be a non-descript species of deer, it is a beautiful little animal, and is found on the Missouri above the Platte. The antelope goes in flocks of several hundreds; the Indians frequently take them, by driving them into the water and attacking them with clubs.

Grosse Corne, so called from the large size of the horns, some of them being two feet in length, and four or five inches in diameter; they are extremely shy, and climb without difficulty to the pinnacle of the highest mountain, and sport upon the giddy verge of precipices. They have been called also *mountain sheep*, but have little resemblance to sheep, except in the head, horns, and feet. On the rump, they are white, but every where else of a dun colour. In size they exceed the deer, and have a fine soft hair: the horns of the male are larger than those of the female. This animal is thought to be the *Agalia*.

The Buffaloe, may be said to have retired north of the Illinois, and west of the Mississippi. The plains of Indiana and Illinois, were once his places of favorite resort, and he loved to frequent the banks of the beautiful Ohio; but encroaching settlements have driven him away. His proper country appears to be the plains of the Missouri; those of Indiana and Illinois, are miniatures of these. Here the buffaloe is found in immense herds; frequently covering the plain as far as the eye can reach. Some of these

herds, have been estimated at ten thousand heads. In the dry season, they are found in the neighbourhood of the great rivers, but there are also regular migrations of them from north to south, when they are seen passing the Missouri, for several days in succession, like the march of Xerxes' army.

The wool of the buffaloe has a peculiar fineness, even surpassing that of the Merino. I have seen gloves made of it, little inferior to silk. But for the difficulty of separating the hair, it might become a very important article of commerce. Should any means be discovered of effecting this, or should it be found, that at certain seasons, there is less of this mixture, the buffaloe wool must become of prime importance in manufactures.

It is curious to observe, that in the instruction to Iberville by the king of France, two things were considered of the first importance, the *pearl fishery*, and the *buffaloe wool*. Charlevoix observes, that he is not surprised that the first should not have been attended to, but he thinks it strange that the second should be neglected even to his time.

Elk and Deer, are found in great numbers in this territory. In the neighbourhood of the settlements, deer are very abundant; the poor animals enjoy some respite from their cruel persecutors, on account of the low state of the peltry trade, and for some time past have been observed to increase. Two varieties of deer are discovered high up on the Missouri. The black tailed, or mule deer; remarkable for very long ears, and tails almost without hair, except at the end where there is a small tuft of a black colour. The other kind is distinguished by very small horns, and a tail of unusual length—eighteen or twenty inches.

There is a species of wolf different from the wolverin, and a curious one of the fox. The braireau or badger, is found on the Mississippi and on the Missouri. The changeable hare *(lepus variabilis)* a beautiful animal, gray in summer, and white in winter, is seen in this country.

The Prairie Dog, or Squirrel, is a great curiosity. It lives in burrows, or as they are commonly called *towns*, and is about a third larger than the fox squirrel. The head is thick and clumsy, it has large jaws, full, large eyes, but the ear is remarkably small. The body is long, and legs short, the tail not much larger than that of a common ground squirrel, and very delicate; the hair short and sleek; of a light gray, excepting on the belly, where it is white. It is without doubt a species of squirrel, though it has a cloven lip like the rabbit. It makes a noise very similar to that of the ground squirrel, though much louder; and resembling in a slight degree, the barking of a very small dog. When at some distance from its hole, which, however, seldom happens, it may be easily caught, but is exceedingly fierce in the first instance; yet in a few days, it becomes perfectly domesticated, and is pleased with being caressed. It seldom drinks; it feeds on the grass which grows around its hole, and remains torpid during the winter. These towns are to be found in the large prairies about three hundred miles west of the Mississippi, and are frequently more than a mile in length. The situation chosen, is generally dry, being on the slope of a hill, and at a distance from any water course. When a person approaches, he is assailed by the whole village, with a noise, which as I have mentioned, bears a resemblance to the barking of small dogs. The animals

are seen behind small hillocks at the side of their holes: on approaching within a few yards of one of these, the inhabitant instantly retreats to his subterraneous apartments. The wolves have declared war against these curious people, and frequently commit great havoc, in their little republics.

The *Gopher*, (this name is also given to a species of terrapin,) is supposed to be a non-descript; it lives under ground, in the prairies, and is also found east of the Mississippi. It bears resemblance to the mole, but is twice the size of that animal. It has at each jaw, a kind of bag, or purse, about one inch and a half in length, for the purpose of conveying food, or for carrying the dirt out of its hole. The quantity of earth thrown up, forms a number of small mounds through the prairies, of several feet in height.

The *Alligator*, is too well known to require any thing to be said of him. He is not considered a ferocious or dangerous animal by the inhabitants. The numbers of this animal have lessened of late years from the destruction made by the inhabitants, who value their skins.

The *Cameleon*, is very common; and I am informed, that in the southern parts, both the scorpion and the tarantula exist.

Of the feathered tribes, something may also be said. There is a beautiful bird called the prairie hen, which I think is not described. In winter it is found in large flocks, comes into barn-yards, and frequently alights on the houses of the villagers. It is somewhat larger than the pheasant of the United

Note by Mr. Bradbury.—If the Gopher is not the animal, described in the Systema Naturæ, as *mus bursarius*, by Linnæus, it is yet undescribed.

States, *(tetrao umbellus,)* which it resembles somewhat in colour, but in shape is much like the guinea hen: and differs from the pheasant in being easily domesticated. The flesh is dry, black, and by no means palatable. There is a bird on the Missouri, which bears a strong resemblance to the pheasant, but is nearly as large as a turkey hen; it is described as being a fine bird. I have seen a specimen of the Columbia partridge, of the most beautiful plumage. The magpie is found in abundance on the Missouri.

In the settlements, and for a considerable distance up the Missouri, turkies stalk through the woods, in numerous flocks, but are rarely met with where the open country commences. Quails, *tetrao marilandica*, are found every where. In the fall of the year all the lakes are literally covered with wild fowl; ducks, geese, swans, cranes, and a variety of others.

VEGETABLE PRODUCTIONS.

I have already observed that an extensive field lies open to the botanist. There are even some considerable forest trees, yet undescribed: there is particularly one very beautiful, *bois jaune*, or yellow wood: by some called the mock orange. In size, it equals that of the largest peach tree, and the leaves, though longer, are pretty nearly similar. The trunk is short, the limbs branching out low down. The fruit has some resemblance to the orange, but more spherical, and covered with tubercles; the colour, when at maturity, is a pale yellow. This fruit has been deemed poisonous, but perhaps without reason: in its green state, it gives forth when cut, a milky fluid, which possesses a cor-

rosive quality, blackening the knife, with which it is cut, like the pine apple. It would certainly be in gardens a highly ornamental tree; Mr. Choteau, of St. Louis, has planted one in his garden, which thrives well. The tree is found on the Osage, Arkansas, and other places west of the Mississippi; I have seen one near Natchitoches, on the Red river, it is found, in low, moist and swampy ground. The wood is remarkably heavy, scarcely yielding to lignum vitæ, and of a beautiful yellow. It might be of use in dyes, or for inlaying. It is in great request among the Indians, for war clubs, and for bows.

There is a grape on the Missouri, found in the prairies, which ripens in the month of June, as far north as latitude 40 deg. It is very sweet and pleasant. A hundred writers, have spoken of the vines of the Illinois, with strange exaggeration. This forms a part of the pictures of the romancing writers, who first described Louisiana. Father Hennepin, describes the *sugar cane*, as growing spontaneously, on the banks of the Mississippi, and tells of purple cluster of grapes, imparting their rich hues to the gliding wave. Notwithstanding the figure the vines of this country have made in description, they are very little different from those of the United States. Formerly a wretched sort of wine was made of the *winter grape*, but which is at present almost neglected. These vintages were never considered of much importance. The wine was made by bruising the grapes in a large tub; a heavy stone was then placed on them, to press out the juice, which flowed through an opening at the bottom into a vessel prepared for its reception.

Amongst the forest trees of this country, the cedar, (juniperus virginiana,) the cotton wood, (popu-

lus angulisens,) and the pecanne, (juglans olivæ formis) deserve particular attention. The cedar grows in great abundance and perfection. There are fine groves on the Maramek, St. Francis, Missouri, and on the Mississippi. Some very large islands in the Missouri are covered with this tree. The houses in the villages are generally built of this wood, which is also used for their enclosures. The cotton wood (so called from a down which it casts off in the spring, with which the air is filled like fleeces of snow) does not appear to have attracted as much attention as it deserves. It is invariably found on the river bottoms of the Mississippi and Missouri, and after the willow, is the first tree which springs up on alluvion soils. The more ancient islands of the rivers west of the Mississippi, as well as on that river, are covered with this tree; it adds much to the beauty of the scenery, from its lofty and uniform appearance, and the deep green of its foilage contrasted with the light colour of the river. The growth of this tree is extremely rapid; it shoots up in the course of a few years, into a noble column, several feet in diameter, and forty or fifty in height, before it becomes lost in branches. It permits no part lately gained from the river to remain long uncovered; and will afford wood to the settlers of adjacent prairie, which could not otherwise be settled,

Note by Mr. Bradbury.—On the Ohio and on the Mississippi, there are two kinds of grapes, not found in the United States; *vitas æstivalis* and *vitis riparia;* the last is a very fine grape. There are also two species on the Missouri, the one described, and a white grape said to be very fine. The change which all the American vines, undergo from culture, is truly surprising; kind and bounteous nature, seems to have furnished vines suited to every climate and soil; so that no part of the human race should be denied this genial blessing.

as it answers extremely well for rails and fuel. The pecanne, is found on the low grounds, where it grows to most perfection; it is a large tree resembling somewhat the hickory, but has a more delicate leaf, its branches are more numerous and spreading, is in every respect a more beautiful tree, and forms a principal ornament of the plantations on the lower parts of the Mississippi. There were formerly beautiful groves of it on the American bottom, (Illinois) but they have been nearly destroyed in order to procure the nuts. The sugar tree *(acer saccharinus)* is found in the present limits of the settlements, but not far to the west, or to the south. The cypress, magnolia, ever green oak, and a number of other trees, common in the state of Louisiana, have been amply described by Barton and Michaud.

Amongst the wild fruits of Louisiana, the plum has been celebrated. They are in great abundance. Amongst the species of plums in Louisiana, and particularly at some distance up the Missouri, there is none more interesting than the prairie plum, *(prunus chickasa)* which literally covers tracts of ground, of many acres in extent, and produces fruit so abundantly, as to bend down to the earth with its weight. There are others which deserve to be transplanted into our gardens; the yellow plum is delicious. Mulberries are very abuudant, both on the Mississippi, and a considerable distance up the Missouri. The woods and prairies are every where overrun with strawberry vines; the fruit is excellent. *Le Haut Missouri*, (the upper Missouri, the name given it by the French traders) surpasses the other parts of the territory, in the variety of wild fruits; plums, cherries, currants, and a variety of berries.

Of flowers, and herbaceous plants, peculiar to there exists a great variety; the natural consequence of the difference of habit, arising from the prairies, and flint knobs, which of course give birth to distinct tribes in the vegetable kingdom; many of of which, could not exist in the umbrageous woods of the eastern states. But want of botanical skill, and the plan assumed for these cursory views, prevent me from entering into detail. White clover, grows wild in many parts of the country. In Upper Missouri, the plains are filled with hysop; near the mountains, there is a species of flax which grows very abundantly. Hunters tell of some curious plants on the Arkansas, amongst which are the common sun-flower, the bean, and the simblin, which grow there in their natural state. There is no reason to think this improbable, for these plants are known to be indigenous.

MINERALS.

If we denominate parts of the United States, by their predominating characters, and qualities; this territory may be called the country of minerals.

A small quantity of gold, is said to have been found on the St. Francis, by an inhabitant of St. Genevieve; it is probable, that some of the precious metals may be found, and it is certain that nearly all the useful ones exist in great abundance. A story is related of a wonderful metalic mass, on the Black river; this is not sufficiently attested, to merit much attention. The weight of the mass, being disproportioned to its size, causes a curious deception to the Indians, who, in consequence, call it a manitou or spirit. A story similar to this, was told me by an Arikara chief, of a mass which he has

frequently seen in a prairie near the Black mountains. Another has actually been brought down Red river, by some hunters; it is probably native iron.—It is the prevailing opinion, that there is silver, and numerous stories are related respecting it. A hundred places, where there is said to be silver ore, are indicated from the information of Indians and hunters; on the Missouri, Arkansas, and on the waters of White river. Geographers have for a long time, agreed in placing a gold mine on the Arkansas; and, considering the precision with which it is marked on the map, it is surprising to me that some of our enterprising Americans do not avail themselves of it. Many accounts have been given of silver mines on the Red river, above the Cado nation. Du Pratz asserts positively, that silver ore was brought from thence in his time.

When we view the space between the Rocky mountains, the Cordilleras, (which pervade New Mexico) and the rivers Missouri and Mississippi, a conjecture may be formed not altogether unworthy of attention. Silver mines, it is well known, have been discovered north of the Cordilleras, and between them, according to the information of lieut. (now col.) Pike, they are actually wrought by the Spaniards. From the resemblance, in the character and appearance of this country, to that which lies between the Cordilleras and the Missouri, besides, the connection of the different ridges, it seems probable that the same minerals are common to both the southern and northern side of those mountains; or at least disappear gradually towards the north and north east. The volcanic tract, perhaps, is the tract of precious minerals. This conjecture, however, is liable to objections, and is therefore submitted with diffidence.

With more certainty I will venture to mark the situation and extent of the mineral tracts, or at least so much of them, as traverse the territory. Nearest to the Mississippi, and beginning south on the St. Francis and White river, with its main course and diverging dependencies, perhaps two hundred miles in width, and six hundred in length, is the tract of lead mineral; perhaps the most extensive body of any mineral, known in the world. On all the great rivers which traverse this tract, the ore shews itself, in their channels, in a variety of places; as also in ravines where the soil has been carried off. This is the case on the Maramek, the Gasconade, the Osage, on the Mine river of the Missouri, on the Missouri itself, on la rivere des Moines, and at length on the Mississippi, below the Ouisconsing. At this place it crosses the river, and is seen, though in small quantities, in places round the Michigan. There is very little doubt but that all this extent abounds in lead ore, and may afford thousands of the richest mines.

The lead mines, at present wrought and productive, are those between the St. Francis, and the Maramek: extending over a tract of about sixty miles in length, and twenty in breadth: and those at the Ouisconsing, on the Mississippi, above the prairie du Chien. I reserve the description of the first for a separate chapter. The mines of the prairie du Chien, are still in the lands of the Sacs and Foxes, and wrought by themselves exclusively; but in a very imperfect manner. Last year (1811) they made about five hundred thousand weight, which they disposed of to traders. By some, these mines have been considered the richest yet opened. The Indians are badly provided with tools for min-

ing; a common hoe is almost the only instrument which they use. They merely scratch away the soil a few feet, and the ore may be said without exaggeration, to be prized up, in the manner of stones in a quarry. The mode of smelting is equally rude. The ore is thrown on piles of wood, and the lead is afterwards gathered up in cakes, in the shapes and forms, assumed by melted lead, when carelessly thrown out on a hearth. It is afterwards melted by the traders, and made into pigs by the use of moulds.

West of the tract of lead mineral, is that of the salines: It runs parallel with the other, but goes further south, and not so far north. The extent is not well known. This tract affords the most numerous and best salines, of any part of North America. The number, on the Arkansas, and on the Osage, is surprisingly great. At the salines on the last river, there is a greater number of the enormous bones of the mammoth, and of other animals, now extinct, than at the Big Bone Lick, or in any other part of America.* I have already touched upon the extraordinary body of salt, near the Arkansas. This appears to be the principal seat of the salines. The water of the Arkansas, itself, is brackish, and persons ascending, are obliged to provide themselves, from such streams and springs of fresh water, as

* I am informed about two hundred miles from St. Louis. No collection has yet been made from this place. The bones are found in some places on the surface of the earth, and generally a few feet under ground. The traditions said to prevail amongst the Indians on this subject, are easily accounted for by those, who are acquainted with the custom amongst those people of inventing and relating amusing tales, like the Arabs. The big bones would naturally furnish a hint. I have heard several on this very subject more curious than those, which have been recited, as affording evidence of the existence of the animal.

put into it. Near the place, where this tract crosses the Arkansas, several streams enter it, which are strongly impregnated with salt; among others, the Big Saline, and the Strong Saline, both nearly one hundred yards in width. It is here that the Salt Rock is said to be found, and that salt prairies are known to exist. The Salt Rock (if there be such a thing) has not been described by any person, who has examined it. The notion of its existence was probably suggested by the solid masses of salt, found in low places, which have formed drains, or reservoirs for the higher surrounding ground; after the evaporation of the water, a crust of good salt is left in the bottom, congealed like ice. And of this, there appear to be accumulations. The colour is of the purest white; there is usually a mixture of gypsum, and I have seen some pieces penetrated with sparry matter. Considerable quantities are also scattered over the prairies, in a pulverised state, resembling sand, and which is gathered by the Indians with the wing of a turkey.

I do not mean by marking off these tracts, to convey the idea, that it is only in such parts, that certain minerals exist, but merely as the predominating character, and where these minerals most abound. Throughout every part of the territory, there are salines, but far below the great scale of those, in the tract which crosses the Arkansas and Osage rivers.

The volcanic tract, may be placed west of the last, in the slope, and spurs of the Rocky Ridge. It was formerly conjectured from the pumice found floating on the Missouri, that some part of the country, traversed by this river, or its waters, was volcanic; this still remains uncertain. There is no doubt but that many of these appearances arise from the burn-

ing of coal banks. Near the Mandans, there are places in which smoke is emitted from the high banks of the river, and putting down a stick into the fissure, fire is instantly communicated. I think it probable, that a close examination of the country, will discover traces of extinguished volcanoes. Mr. Lisa informed me, that he had been told by Indians, and some of his hunters, that about sixty miles from his fort, on the Roche Jaune, at the entrance of a river, there is a mountain which emits flames. This is about two hundred miles from the mouth of the Roche Jaune. In this part of the country, I am well informed that great quantities of sulphur can be procured; it is found not only in caves, but can be scraped off the prairies in the manner of the salt.

I have spoken of the minerals which are found in the greatest quantities, I shall now mention such, as are more thinly dispersed through the territory.

Copper, is certainly found on the Mississippi, between la riviere des Moines and the Ouisconsing; and several other places in the territory are mentioned. There is iron ore on the St. Francis, on the Maramek, on the Osage, and in great quantities throughout the White river country. On the St. Francis there are said to be huge masses like rocks. Several gentlemen who have examined specimens from these different places, do not think favourably of the ore, but I believe no proper trial of it has yet been made.

There doubtless exists a variety of minerals, which a better acquaintance with the country will discover: it has not been attentively examined by any skilful mineralogist. Mr. Bradbury, on a visit

to the mine a Burton, informed me that he found those working at the mines, throwing away as useless, the *blende* ore of Zinc. The late Dr. Elliot, of St. Genevieve,* informed me that an Indian had once brought him a specimen of antimony, but that he could not be prevailed upon by any offers to show the place where it was procured: believing, probably, from the reward offered him, that it must be something of great value.

Coal, seems to be a fossil common to every part of the valley of the Mississippi, the space between the range of mountains towards the Atlantic, and that towards the Pacific. It is found in every part of this territory. On the east side of the Mississippi, in the bluffs of the American bottom, a tree taking fire some years ago, communicated it by one of its roots to the coal, which continued to burn, until the fire was at length smothered by the falling in of a large mass of the incumbent earth. The appearance of fire, is still visible for several rods around. About two miles further up the bluffs, a fine coal bank has been opened; the vein as thick as any of those near Pittsburgh.

Salt petre has been made on the Gasconade, and there is no doubt, but that great abundance may be had throughout this country, which reposes on limestone, and is consequently cavernous. In caves, from the Missouri to the St. Francis, there are immense quantities of a pure silex, adhering like the solid rock; it is as white as refined sugar, and so

*Formerly of Connecticut. I cannot refrain from seizing this opportunity of paying a tribute to the memory of that excellent man. Possessed of a philosophic and enlightened mind, and the most amiable disposition ever gifted to a mortal. He was formed to instruct and to be beloved

much like it, that the difference is not discernable to the eye. I have seen a deception practised on a stranger, by giving him a lump and passing it for sugar. It crumbles with the pressure of the fingers: in the manufacture of glass, it may undoubtedly be of use. A beautiful *serpentine*, of a red colour, is found about three hundred miles west of the Mississippi, near the heads of la riviere des Moines and the St. Peters, and of which the Indians make their pipes. It is soft and easily cut into any shape in the first instance, but soon assumes the hardness of stone. A curious circumstance is connected with this and noticed by several writers. The Indians of different tribes, no matter how inveterate or fierce their animosities, meet here, always in peace. In this sacred spot of general rendezvous, that most ungovernable of savage propensities, revenge, is completely subdued.

There is marble in the territory in various places; it resembles that which is commonly found in Kentucky; but none of a superior quality has yet been discovered. On Bon Homme creek, about fifteen miles from St. Louis, a quarry of stone was opened some time ago, said to equal the French burr. The mill stones procured here are thought by good judges to be of a superior quality, and it only remains for experience to decide.

Earths and clays of a rare and useful kind, have been found in different parts of the territory. Gypsum, may be had in any quantities, on the Maramek, Osage, Missouri, &c; on the Kansas, I have been informed by hunters, there are whole bluffs composed of it. In the district of Cape Girardeau, there is a kind of clay, which in painting, answers the purpose of Ochre.

I shall here notice a phenomenon frequently observed; but without attempting a solution, which is left to the scientific. On the St. Francis, and in the White river country, subterraneous explosions, have been heard, and their effects discerned. The sound is like that of cannon or distant thunder; and the earth and rocks appear to have been convulsed as though by the force of gun powder. The rocks blown up, are glazed with a shining matter, of metallic appearance. The same phenomenon has been observed on the Sabine, Washita, and other western rivers.

CHAP. VIII.

Indian nations—trade—general enumeration.

THE Indian population has surprisingly diminished, since the first settlement of the colony. There were many considerable nations or tribes which no longer exist, and others have dwindled to a few individuals who wander along the banks of the river, from place to place, without any settled habitation. On the arrival of Iberville, the *Baya Goulas,* near the mouth of the Mississippi, had upwards of seven hundred families in their principal town, and a very curious description of their temple is given by Charlevoix. The chevalier de Tonti, in his first voyage, paid a visit to the Tensas, who lived on the lake which now bears that name, and to his surprize entered a town laid off with considerable regularity, and very populous. He found the king surrounded by a guard of sixty men, and exhibiting a kind of state, something like that of Powetan, the Virginia monarch. On a visit to the temple, he saw their sacred fire, and found their worship precisely similar to that of the Mexicans. The account given of these people is very curious: one of their superstitious rites might be safely imitated by civilized people. Every spring they went in a body to the deepest part of the forest, and for several days occupied themselves to the sound of their musical instruments, in clearing a piece of ground, which they called

their place of spirits, where they performed their incantations. By this means, they had a number of beautiful fields around their town.

The *Natchez*, of whom we have spoken, were estimated at three thousand warriors. The Houmas, the Wabashas, the Tarakas, the Kappa, the Abenagis, the Tacucas, are the names of tribes long since extinct. The Osages, resided in twenty-two villages on the Missouri, and on the river which bears their name: and for several hundred miles, the borders of the former were extremely populous. The Illinois, now extinct, could once number twenty thousand souls. When I say populous, I speak comparatively: for the whole, did not amount to a tenth of the whites, who now occupy a country, which is still a wilderness.

In the Missouri territory, there are two or three Shawanese villages, a sober and orderly people. On the waters of White river, there are a number of Cherokees and other southern Indians, who have migrated to this quarter within a few years. Stragglers may be seen at all seasons of the year, about the villages of the whites, or on the banks, who subsist by vending the produce of their hunting, to the people who descend the river.

The diminution of the numbers of these Indians was produced by the intercourse of the whites with the more northern, who being supplied with fire arms, assailed the defenceless and peaceable inhabitants of the Mississippi valley. This work of destruction, must have been going on for nearly a century before Europeans had any acquaintance with the interior. The Iroquois were in the habit of making war excursions, even as far as the Natches. The intercourse of the traders, has been uniformly

most pernicious to these people. No sooner do the Indians receive their extraordinary supply of arms and ammunition, than they become restless and prepare for war; elated beyond measure, these children of nature, can never be contented until they have an opportunity of making a trial of their weapons.

The Indians on the waters of the Missouri, who at present amount to about thirty thousand, were also much more numerous; but their diminution was caused about forty years ago, by the ravages of the small pox. All the tribes which at this day wander over the immense plains of the west, are but wretched remnants, not probably more than the tenth of the numbers which existed fifty years ago. These western barbarians, like those of Asia, were in all probability, the enemies to the progress of agriculture and civilization, on the fertile borders of the Mississippi and Ohio. Within a few years past, their numbers have been increasing rapidly. Notwithstanding the formidable list I have given in the subjoined table, these tribes are scattered over such an immense space as scarcely to be noticed in it. I could not help reflecting on the unequal distribution of the human race, when I descended the Missouri river a thousand miles, without meeting a human being.

The only *fixed* or agricultural villages on the Missouri, are those of the Osage, Mahas, Poncas, Panis, Arikaras, and Mandans; and all on the south west side of the river. On the Blue earth river, and in the forks of the Kansas, there are several villages of the nation of that name, the Pani villages below the mouth of Wolf river, and a village of Ottos and Missouris. Yet even some of these, are abandoned for a great part of the summer season, and their inha-

bitants wander through the plains; generally *en masse*, carrying with them all their property, excepting their corn, and a few bulky articles which they deposit in hiding places. Their baggage is more cumbrous, than would be imagined, and employs a great number of dogs and horses in its transportation from place to place.

All the other nations lead a life similar to that of the shepherds of Asia; it is true, they do not drive domestic herds to the places where the best pasturage may be found, but what amounts nearly to the same thing, they follow the instinctive migrations of the buffaloe, feed upon his flesh and kindle their fires with his ordure. The great object of serious employment in these nations, the ruling passion, is a thirst for mutual destruction. The great distance to which their war parties wander in pursuit of this darling gratification is indeed surprising; eight hundred or a thousand miles is not an unusual journey. It is only, however, on women and children, and on parties taken by surprize, that their attacks prove really bloody and destructive. In their more regular engagements, or battles, where there is something like equality in the adverse parties, they engage, generally on horseback, in a manœuvering fight, in which they display wonderful activity and skill on both sides, so much so, that they do each other very little harm. A battle between three and four hundred men on each side, will continue a whole day, and be at length terminated by the death of two or three, and as many wounded. In this they bear a strong resemblance to the Arabs; it is the result of the theatre of war on which they engage, the open plains, and not the want of courage.

Nearly all the nations of the north west side, are descendants of the Sioux, and at peace with each other, but with scarcely an exception, at war with those on the south west side. These nations have considerable trade or traffic with each other. The Sioux have for this purpose regular fairs, or assemblages, at stated periods. The same thing prevails with the nations on the south west side of the Missouri. Those towards the south, have generally vast numbers of horses, mules, and asses, which they obtain in trade, or war, from the Spaniards, or nations immediately bordering on New Mexico. These animals are chiefly transferred to the nations north east of the river, by such of the southern tribes as happen to be on good terms with them, who obtain in exchange European articles, procured from the British traders. Their stock of horses requires to be constantly renewed by thefts or purchases: from the severity of the climate and the little care taken of the young, the animal would otherwise be in danger of becoming extinct. Their mode of trading with each other is perfectly primitive. Their is no bargaining or dispute about price; a nation or tribe comes to a village, encamps near it, and after demonstrations on both sides, of a thousand barbarous civilities, as sincere as those which are the result of refinement, one of the parties makes a general present of all such articles as it can conveniently spare: the other a short time after makes in return a similar present, the fair is then concluded by a variety of games, sports and dances. They hold the mode of trading by the whites, in great contempt; they say it displays a narrow and contemptible soul to be weighing and counting every trifle. In their trade the price is usually fixed by the chief and his council, and the nation as well as traders must submit.

Their arms consist principally of bows, spears, clubs, and light fusees. But the bow, particularly in hunting, is still the principal weapon. Like all savages they are superstitious. It appeared to me that if they had any particular object of adoration it was the buffaloe head. They place it in every holy or sacred spot of ground, and each lodge or tent, has one or two, to which the whole family seems to pay the utmost reverence. I saw in the village of the Mandan chief, She-he-ke, in an open space before the temple or medicine lodge, an enclosure of about six feet square, in which were four of these heads on elevated mounds of earth.

I had not sufficient time to form any idea of their languages, but from what I was able to learn, there are about six primitive ones: it is very probable that a more accurate scrutiny would discover of those, several common to other nations of the continent. It appeared to me that the Snake Indians, both in language and in appearance were different from any Indians I had ever seen. In the sound of the language there is a good deal of resemblance to those of Africa which I have heard. I am informed that copious vocabularies have been made by Lewis and Clark, of nearly all the Indian languages of the Missouri. As their journal is expected shortly to appear, I shall not publish the collection made by me, which must necessarily be much inferior to theirs; they having had more time and much greater opportunities.

The trade with the western Indians will claim some observations in this place. Under the Spanish government, the corruption of its officers countenanced the most shameful abuses in this department. The trader obtained an exclusive privilege from the

Intendant at New-Orleans, for the trade of a particular river or tribe, for which he gave a handsome douceur. In fact, it came in time to be a matter of purchase to be obtained by the highest bidder. In consequence, the trader was compelled to demand an exhorbitant price for his goods, which induced the Indians to take by force what they could not buy. Had this system continued much longer, it would have put an end to the traffic altogether. The English fur companies could afford their goods at much lower prices, and frequently instigated the Indians to pillage the Spanish traders who ascended the river. The British policy has been, (at least of these companies) to give their goods on a very small profit, but to sell their liquors enormously high. After an Indian has once supplied himself, with the articles which he stands in immediate want, he becomes lazy and ceases to hunt; but with the hope presented to his imagination, of obtaining a keg of whiskey, he will toil incessantly.

The traders were in the habit of passing themselves off for chiefs of the whites, and always delivered a talk from the "Great Father." But their conduct brought them into contempt, which was extended to all the whites. It had been customary to give credits to the Indians, and the trader on returning to the nation, sometimes found that the skins intended for him, had been already obtained by some rival; a fight now ensued, to the great diversion of the Indians. It was usual to ascend the river in autumn, and remaining until spring, at some place of convenient resort, they descended to St. Louis on the breaking up of the ice. There were no forts established by the government to keep the tribes in check and impress them with a favorable opinion of the

whites. The only permanent trading establishment, was that of M. Choteau, on the Osage river. Others wintered at the Mahas, Poncas, or at other points of the Missouri. A trader of the name of L'Oiselle, had a fort at Cedar island, in the country of the Sioux, about twelve hundred miles up, which was then the highest point at which any establishments had been made.

On the change of government, this trade was thrown open to all who chose to engage in it. At the same time, to remedy the evils which had sprung up from the erroneous policy before pursued, three forts were established; one on the Mississippi, at the Wisconing; for the purpose of keeping the Indians in check in that quarter, and preventing the British traders from passing into their country, and exerting the enmity of those people against us, with the sordid view of possessing their trade exclusively. Another was established near the river des Moines, about two hundred miles above the mouth of the Missouri, and a third near the Kansas on this river. At each of these, agents or factors, were established with stated salaries, for the purpose of supplying the Indians with merchandise purchased by the United States. The intention of these establishments, certainly deserve commendation; they are founded on benevolence, but it is very doubtful whether they answer any good purpose. The design is to supply the Indians at the first cost, after deducting the mere expenses of the establishments. A wide field is, however, opened to abuses, and the stiff precise mode of conducting the trade, is not pleasing to the Indians, who receive some things as presents from the trader, by which they are disposed to give more for others. There is besides, an impropriety in this

appearance of competition with the traders: every purpose was answered by opening the trade to all persons of enterprize. If it be supposed, that any thing like gratitude is excited among the Indians by this kindness, it is a great mistake; they uniformly speak of these establishments with contempt, and when they resort to them, it is most usually with their worst peltries; the best being reserved for the traders.

There is an abuse which our government ought not to overlook, and that is, the number of white hunters, who frequent the Indian country. They are much more skilful and industrious, and therefore destroy the game, upon which the Indians subsist. This destruction, of late, has been surprisingly great. I should not wonder, if in a few years, unless a stop be put to this practice, the Indians would not be able to procure any thing to exchange for our merchandize.

The number of forts established to the westward is undoubtedly too small. There ought to be one near the mouth of the Platte, one at the Cedar island, one on the Arkansas, and a fourth on the river St. Peters. A company of men might be kept up at each of these places, and would have the most beneficial effect on the Indians.

Notwithstanding the freedom of trading was open to all, on possession being taken by the United States, it was not until after the return of Lewis and Clark from their expedition that any perceptible change took place. Mr. Manuel Lisa, an enterprising gentleman of St. Louis, was the first to venture towards the source of the Missouri for the purpose of trading. His own capital not being adequate to the undertaking, he was joined by two or three gentlemen of St.

Louis. A brief account of his expedition, as it may be considered somewhat connected with the fur trade of Louisiana, may not be uninteresting in this place.

He set off in the spring following the return of Lewis and Clark. Besides his own boats there were two others in company, which constituted a tolerable force. These trading expeditions are very different from journeys of discovery; the trader has unruly hands to manage, who think themselves perfectly at liberty when out of the reach of law: without discipline, badly armed, and not coming to the nations, for the purpose of making presents.

At the river Platte, Lisa met one of Lewis and Clark's men, of the name of Coulter, who had been discharged at the Mandan villages, at his own request, that he might make a hunt before he returned. Coulter was persuaded to return; his knowledge of the country and nations rendered him an acquisition. Lisa passed the country of the Sioux, without finding any of that nation. On his arrival at the Arikara villages, his reception was such as to call for great prudence and courage. Two or three hundred warriors were drawn up, and on his approach, such as had fire arms discharged a volley before his boat, to indicate the place where he should land. He accordingly put to shore, but made it known, that no one of them was to enter his boat: while the chiefs appointed warriors to stand guard and keep off the crowd. The women, who always trade amongst these nations, came to the beach with bags of corn, an Indian rushed forward, cut open the bags with his knife, while the women took to flight. Lisa, who was perfectly acquainted with the Indian character, knowing that the least appearance of alarm would be dangerous, instantly called his men to arms, pointed

a couple of swivels which were fixed on his boats, and made every preparation for defence. The Indians perceiving this, dispersed in confusion; and after some time, the chiefs approached with pipes of peace, extended before them in their hands. Lisa making signs of reconciliation, they came to him, and according to their custom, stroked him on the shoulders, begging him not to be displeased, declaring that the Indian who had offended him was considered a bad man. This had a good effect, and enabled him to proceed on his voyage without further molestation.

On his arrival at the first Mandan village, he determined to proceed through the others, which are situated at intervals along the river, in the distance of about twenty miles, while his boats continued to ascend. At this village, he held the usual council with the chiefs, and presented them a few rolls of tobacco, and other articles, and was permitted to continue his journey. At the third village, his presents were rejected, and the chief demanded some powder, which was refused: Lisa, knew that his life was in no danger while his death could not procure them his goods, and resisted their repeated solicitations in a bold and firm manner; he told them that they might kill him, but that his property would be safe. They were finally compelled to accept of such presents as he offered.

A few days after, having passed the Mandans, he espied the Assineboin nation approaching, in a body of four or five thousand souls. These wandering people had learned from their scouts, the approach of traders. The whole prairie, to use his expression, was *red with them;* some on horseback, others on foot, and all painted for war. His situation re-

quired the utmost boldness and intrepidity. He charged his swivels and made directly across to the savages, and when he had come within an hundred yards, the match was put, while there was at the same time, a general discharge of small arms. This was intended to strike them with terror; the effect was ludicrous, they fell back, tumbled over each other, and fled to the hills with precipitation. A few of the warriors and chiefs only remained. The pipe of peace was presented, and matters concluded amicably. He continued his voyage to the Yellow Stone river, which he ascended about one hundred and seventy miles, to the Big Horn river, where he built a trading fort. He shortly after dispatched Coulter, the hunter before mentioned, to bring some of the Indian nations to trade. This man, with a pack of thirty pounds weight, his gun and some ammunition, went upwards of five hundred miles to the Crow nation; gave them information, and proceeded from thence to several other tribes. On his return, a party of Indians, in whose company he happened to be, was attacked, and he was lamed by a severe wound in the leg; notwithstanding which, he returned to the establishment, entirely alone and without assistance, several hundred miles. Yet such instances of intrepidity would not be regarded amongst the people, as any way extraordinary. How should those blush, who are continually whining about the little inconveniences and privations of common life! Lisa remained nine months at this place. He returned to St. Louis, having indemnified himself for his voyage, as the north side of the Missouri was much more abundant in furs, and of a more valuable quality.

After the return of Lisa, the favorable reports which he made, induced a number of gentlemen to

turn their attention to this trade, and in a short time a company was formed under the name of "the Missouri Fur Company; of this association Lisa became a member, and has been one of the most active and useful. The company was composed of ten persons; but the capital was greatly inadequate, not exceeding forty thousand dollars. Having collected about two hundred and fifty men, they ascended the Missouri; left trading establishments with the Sioux, the Arikaras, and Mandans, but the principal part proceeded to the three forks of the Missouri, the country most abounding in beaver, as their intention was to hunt as well as trade, the principal part of their men being hunters. They had not been long here until they found their hopes entirely frustrated by the hostilities of the Blackfeet Indians, a numerous tribe, who had unfortunately been rendered inimical to the Americans by an unlucky affair, in which Lewis and Clark, on their return, had killed two or three of their nation; besides, probably instigated by the British companies. A party of fifteen or twenty hunters were attacked by surprise, and nine killed. The greatest precaution was found necessary in going out to hunt, they were at length so much harrassed by the savages, as to be compelled to remain altogether at their fort, or to venture but a short distance from it. It is supposed that in the different renconters with these savages, at least twenty of the whites were killed, and nearly twice that number of the others. Thus a most implacable enmity has been uniformly excited, which will for a long time, exclude our traders and hunters, from that part of the western country by far the most favorable for their pursuits. It is supposed that had they continued unmolested, the com-

pany would have brought down the first year, three hundred packs of beaver alone. Instead of which there were scarcely twenty. The following spring a considerable number of the party descended the river; the remainder continued until autumn, when, fearing a general attack, and finding the situation otherwise exceedingly irksome, Mr. Henry, one of the company, who now commanded the party, resolved to cross the mountains, and winter on some of the branches of the Columbia; this he accordingly effected, but not without suffering every possible hardship, from hunger, cold, and fatigue. In the mean time, the company suffered considerable loss from the accidental burning of one of the factories; this was estimated at fifteen thousand dollars. The establishments at the Mandans and Arikaras, brought no profit. In the spring of the year 1811, the third, and by the time fixed for the duration of the association, the last, an expedition was fitted out by the company, the command of which was given to Lisa, whom I accompanied. By his prudence and good management, the affairs of the company were in some measure retrieved. After remaining some time at the Mandan villages, he was joined by Mr. Henry and all his party, who brought about forty packs of beaver. Leaving trading establishments at the Mandans, Arikaras, and with the Sioux, he descended to St. Louis. It appeared that at the termination of the third year, notwithstanding all these unforeseen difficulties and misfortunes, the company had saved its capital, and had, besides, the establishments before mentioned. I have been informed that the company has been renewed, and its capital considerably enlarged.

Such is the present situation of the Indian trade. Besides, the Missouri company, there are many individuals, who trade with nations on the Mississippi, or on the Missouri, as high as the Mahas. There are few of the Indian tribes who hunt; they have hitherto had little encouragement; and besides, the continual wars which prevail amongst them, renders it impracticable.

A well regulated company, with sufficient capital, would in a very short time draw immense profits from the Indian trade of the Mississippi and Missouri. A very great proportion of the North West Company's trade, would find its way down those rivers. The city of New-York is highly interested; its situation may render it the rival of Montreal in this trade; the climate of New-Orleans is unfavourable to furs and peltries. Near the heads of all the western rivers, tributary to the Mississippi and Missouri, there are immense numbers of the beaver, muskrat, otter, and other furred animals. An extensive company, well established, might count upon a thousand packs annually, besides a vast number of buffaloe robes, which will be found of much use in the slave states, as a cheap and comfortable bedding for negroes. The buffaloe would furnish other articles of trade, wool, horns, tongues, &c. which would also be considerable. Wolf, bear, elk, and deer skins, might be had in immense quantities. It requires no gift of prophecy to tell, that such a company will not be long in forming.

I have subjoined a table, shewing at a glance the Indian nations of Louisiana, their numbers, trade, &c.

A Table of the Indian Nations of Louisiana—Their Trade, &c.

	Names.	War.	Souls.	Country.	Merch.	Ret.	Remarks.
1	Big Osage						
2	Little Osage						
3	band of Big Tracks	1500	5500	on the Osage, Missouri & Arkan.	20000	30000	–trade at the Factory
	Kansas	300	1500	on the Kansas river	3000	5000	at Fort Osage, and on
1	Panis Loup . . .	400	2000	hunt on the Platte and Kansas	6000	10000	the Osage river.
2	Panis Republican	350	1600	on the Kansas			–Council Bluffs would
3	Panis Loup . .	300	1500	on Wolf river, of the Platte	2400	3500	be a proper place for
	Mahas	250	800	eighty leagues above the Platte	4000	7000	a trading establish-
	Poncas	80	450	on the Missouri at the Qui Courre	500	1000	ment.
	Ottos and Missouris	80	450	on the Platte near the Elk horn			
	Chyennes . . .	500	1600	a wandering tribe on the head of the Chienne river	500	1000	–trade at the Arikara village.
	Arikaras . . .	800	3000	1400 miles up the Missouri	1500	3000	
	Mandans	350	2000	1600 miles up the Missouri			–the value of their
	A wa-haa-ways .	50	300	3 miles above the Mandans			trade very inconsider-
	Minetares . . .	600	2500	on Knife R. 6 miles from Mandans			able.
	Wate-pana-toes and Ayuwas . .	200	900	on the Padoncas fork			–these nations have little intercourse with
	Padoucas . . .	300	1000	on the Padoncas			the whites; but inha-
	Kan-ne-na-wish .	1500	5000	a wandering people, on the heads of Yellow Stone river			bit a country abound- ing in game.

Names.	*war.*	*souls.*	*Country.*	*Mer.*	*Ret.*	*Remarks.*
Pasta-now-nas . .	400	1500	between the Padoncas Fork and the Platte . . .			
Crow Indians . .	2000	7000	divided into numerous tribes and scattered over the country on the heads of the Missouri and Yellow Stone	1000	3000	a trading establishment at the three forks of the Missouri would suit these people, provided peace could be made with the Black feet Indians.
Paunch Indians . .	800	2500	N.E. of the Missouri near the head			—trade with the British establishments.
Assineboin . . .	900	3500	3 tribes living near the Missouri			—trade with British—inimical to Americans—their trade might berendered valuable in time of peace.
Black-foot Indians .	2500	5500	in different tribes, near the heads of the Missouri . .			
Gros Ventres of the Prairie	500	2000	N. E. side of the Missouri .			
Ayutans, or Camanches	2000	8000	s. w. of the Missouri .			—have some trade with N. Mexico.
Snake Indians . .	900	5500	near the heads of the Arkansas, Platte and Yellow Stone .			—trade with New Mexico.
Riue mud, and long-hair'd Indians . .			numbers unknown, supposed to reside somewhere on the heads of the Columbia . .			
Flat heads . . .			chiefly on the west side of the Rocky mountains . .			—Lewis and Clarke, first white men who passed through their country.
Knistenoos	300	1000	on Assineboin, and along the lakes		15000	—trade with the British establishments—might be in-
Algonquins . . .	1000	5000				

Names.	*war.*	*souls.*	*Country.*	*Mer.*	*Ret.*	*Remarks.*
Chippoways	900	4000	on the Red river of Winipec, and on the heads of the Mississippi		30000	duced to come on the Missouri.
Saukees	500	2500	on the Mississippi, below the falls of St. Anthony	2000	5000	
Sioux bands	1500	6000	Roam between the Mississippi and Missouri	3000	8000	—Trade on the Missouri at the British establishments.
Foxes	300	1000	with the Saukees	1500	2500	—trade at Prairie du Chien, principally in lead.
Shawanese	300	800	on the Mississippi and St. Francis	1000	3000	—trade in their villages, or
Ayuwas	200	600	on the riviere des Moines	500	1000	come to the settlements for the purpose.
Sioux bands			on the N. E. side of the Missouri and on the Mississippi	5000	20000	—these bands occupy a very extensive country, but which does not abound in valuable furs.
Chickasas & Cherokees	500	2000	on White river	4000	10000	—trade chiefly at the Arkansas post, or with people descending the Mississippi.
Arkansas	200		on the Arkansas river	1000	2000	—at the Arkansas post.
Coddoques	100		on Red river, above Natchitoches			
	10	50	on a branch of Red river			
Nanda-koes	40	180	on the Sabine			
Addaize	20	100	40 miles from Natchitoches			
Alishes		25	live near Natchitoches			

TABLE OF THE INDIAN NATIONS OF LOUISIANA—THEIR TRADE, &c.

Names.	*war.*	*souls.*	*Country.*	*Mer.*	*Ret.*	*Remarks.*
Keyeshees	60	200	east branch of the Trinity river			
Tachees	80	250	on a branch of the Sabine			—these nations trade principally with the public factory at Natchitoches, in the frontier villages; and those tribes beyond the Sabine, chiefly with the people of Mexico.
Nabedoches	80	250	s. w. of the Sabine			
Bedees	100	320	on the Trinity			
Aco-ke-sas	80	240	west of Colerado of St. Bernard			
Mayees	200		near the mouth of Guadaloupe			
Karrn-koo-as	500	1800	on a peninsula in the bay of St. Bernard			
Cances	2000	5500	inhabit the country from the bay of St. Bernard, to Vera Cruz			
Tanks	200	700	wander on the Colerado and Trinity			
Tawakenoes	200	700	200 miles west of Nacogdoches towards Santa Fee			
Tawakenoes or Panis	500	2500	south of the Red river above the Caddoques			
Natchitoches			almost extinct			
Boluxas	25	100	about 60 miles below Natchitoches			These are generally wretched creatures, who are diminishing daily; they cultivate a little corn, and hunt.
Appalaches	14	50	Bayou Rapide			

TABLE OF THE INDIAN NATIONS OF LOUISIANA—THEIR TRADE, &c.

Names.	*war.*	*souls.*	*Country.*	*Mer*	*Ret.*	*Remarks.*
Alibamas Conchatas Pacanas Atta-ka-pas Oppe-lou-sas . . . Tunicas Tensas Washas			These are scattered remnants of tribes, who reside in the state of Louisiana; in the whole they do not exceed 400 warriors			
Chactas	2000	5500	Scattered over every part of the state of Louisiana, from Mobile to the Sabine			I am unable to form any estimate of the value of their trade.

Osage.—They call themselves Wasashe, are divided into three hands: 1. The Great Osage, 2. Little Osage, 3. The band of "Big Track," from a chief who left the nation some years ago, and is now settled on the Arkansas. Their language may be considered the primitive of several others, which are spoken by neighboring nations, without any great difference; as the Arkansas, Kansas, and Mahas. Their trade is principally in deer skins, bear skins, beaver, otter, muskrat, and the buffaloe.

These people have been noted for their uncommon stature; this is somewhat exaggerated, though they are undoubtedly above the ordinary size of men. The wandering or semi-wandering nations of Louisiana, may be characterized as exceeding in stature the whites. The Osages are reputed warlike, but this arises from their being at war with all their neighbors, and not from any uncommon degree of bravery. When compared with the Shawanese, and the nations east of the Mississippi, they might with more propriety be regarded as a treacherous and cowardly race.

Kansas.—A few years ago they were the greatest scoundrels of the Missouri, robbing traders, and ill-treating the whites, but since about two years, in consequence of a severe defeat from the Panis, in which their greatest warriors fell, they have been humbled. They are brave, and are esteemed great warriors. They have their villages on the Kansas river. The country which they inhabit abounds with beaver, but they do not hunt much. They speak the Osage language with some difference of dialect.

Ottoes, (Wa-dook-ta-da.)—They are the descendants of the ancient Missouris, and speak their lan-

guage, which is remarkably lofty and sonorous.—They are not numerous, but esteemed brave and warlike. They reside fifteen leagues up the river Platte, and live in community and friendship with the Panis.

Missouris—The remnant of one of the most numerous nations of the Missouri, and who have given their name to the river. They are reduced to about eighty warriors. They reside with the Ottoes. Their village was formerly at the mouth of the Grand river.

Pani Proper—A much more friendly and civilized people than those just described: they treat their traders and the whites generally with remarkable hospitality, have frequent intercourse with the Spaniards, and live about thirty leagues from the mouth of the river Platte, and in two villages. The Council Bluffs on the Missouri would be a good place for a trading establishment for these people. They have but faint ideas of the exclusive right of soil, and have no fixed boundary; in which, they resemble the greater part of these nations. They hunt on the rivers Platte and Kansas; their country very little wooded, but of a beautiful surface, consisting of open plains.

The Pani Loups, reside on the Wolf river, thirty-six leagues from its mouth. There is said to be a good deal of timbered land between this river and the Corne-de-Cerf, or Elk horn, principally pine and shrubby oak. The two rivers just mentioned, afford excellent navigation; the Wolf river rises in a lake, or rather a large fountain.

The Pani, Republican, a small band which ceceded from the nation a few years ago, reside on the Republican fork, of the Kansas river.

Mahas, (or Oo-ma-ha)—Reside on the Maha creek, about eighty leagues above the Platte, in their village, and raise corn, a friendly and industrious people, and have a considerable trade. Their language originally Osage. All the Sioux bands, except the Yanktons, make war upon them. Their numbers have been reduced within the last ten years.

Poncas—Originally Maha; village a short distance below the Qui Courre. They were almost destroyed by the Sioux, their village broken up, and they were compelled to be altogether wandering; but within a few years, they have re-established their village, and are increasing rapidly.

Arikara—Live 1440 miles up the Missouri, in two villages, an industrious people, but from the attacks of their neighbors, are unable to hunt any other but the buffaloe, though their country abounds in game. They are at present on very friendly terms with the whites, though guilty a few years ago of an outrage on a party commanded by lieut. Prior. In my journal I have dwelt a good deal on the customs and character of these people, which in many respects are peculiar and highly interesting. They were originally Pani.

Mandans, or Gros Ventres—The remnants of a number of villages, according to their account, seventeen. They claim only the small portion of country which they actually occupy; in this, resembling the Arikaras. They still consist of seven villages, five of Gros Ventres, and two of Mandans, in the distance of about fifteen miles. They are generally on good terms with each other, but at present there exist considerable dissentions, and even open rupture. Their is not the least affinity in their languages, but the Gros Ventre is spoken by all the

Mandans. According to the tradition of these last, who were originally of the Crow nation, owing to a quarrel between two chiefs, over the carcase of a buffaloe which they had slain, a separation took place of the followers of each.

Chiennes—Are a wandering nation, on the heads of the Chienne river. Trade with the Arikaras—speak a different language from any nation I know. Their complexion very fair. They trade also with the Spaniards, and have a great number of horses, &c.

Sioux Tribes.—On an ancient map I have seen them named Naddouwessioux; the Neddouwesses of Carver, are probably a band of Sioux—are nearly all wandering tribes, and may be considered as divided into four nations, the Sioux, Teton, Assineboin and Black-feet.

Yanktons—Wander in an agreeable country, a considerable portion of which is woodland—trade on the St. Peters, and on the Missouri at the riviere a'Jaque. Their trade is not valuable, chiefly buffaloe robes and deer skins: they are the most friendly and peaceable of the Sioux bands.

Yanktons of the North.—On Red river of Lake Winipec, and trade with the British establishments.

Wah-pa-tone.—On the north west side of the river St. Peters, to the mouth of the Chippoway river.

Minda-war-Carton—The only Sioux band which attends to the cultivation of the earth; but this not to any great extent. They live on the Mississippi above the river St. Peters. Their country is represented as tolerably fertile, and well watered.

Wah-pa-coo-la—On the south west side of the river St. Peters, from a place called Hardwood, to the Yellow Medicine river, some traffic with the Yanktons and Tetons west of them.

Sessatone—On the upper part of Red river and the St. Peters. This country abounds with small lakes, and in valuable fur animals, beaver, otter, muskrat, martin, &c. They meet the Tetons, &c. on the riviere a'Jaque, about the months of May and June, to trade. They supply the Yanktons with articles of European manufacture, and receive in return, horses, &c.

Tetons, Bois Brule, Arkandada, Mini-kiniad-za, Sahone.—These are the pirates or marauders of the Missouri, their country without timber, and not good for hunting, except as to the buffaloe, they have therefore hardly any thing but buffaloe robes to trade.

The Sioux bands claim as follows: "beginning at the confluence of the riviere des Moines and the Mississippi, thence to the river St. Peters, thence on both sides of the Mississippi to Crow wing river, and upwards with that stream, including the waters of the upper part of Red river of lake Winipec, and down to the Pemberton river; thence a south west course to intersect the Missouri at or near the Mandans, and with that stream, down to the Warricon river, thence crossing the Missouri, it goes to include the lower part of the Chienne river, all the waters of White river, and Teton river, including the lower portion of the Qui Courre, and returns with that stream downward to the Missouri, thence eastward to the beginning."

Assineboin—Divided into the following bands:—*Manetopec*, (gens de Canot,) wander on the Mouse river, between the Assineboin and the Missouri. *Osee-gah*, about the mouth of the little Missouri, to the Assineboin river.

Mah-to-pa-na-to, on the Missouri, about the mouth of the White earth river, and on the head of the Assineboin and Copelle rivers.

These bands trade with the Hudson's Bay Company, who have establishments on the Assineboin and Copelle rivers; occasionally also on the Saskashawin. Their country has little or no timber.

Blackfeet.—They wander on the heads of the Missouri, Maria river, and along the Rocky mountains, they are also Sioux. They trade at the same establishments with the Assineboin, and are at war with the Crow nation. They have been very troublesome to our traders, to whom they have conceived a deadly hatred. Their country the most abundant in beaver and other furs.

Gros Veutres of the Prairie—Speak the Crow language, and wander on the south fork of the Saskashawin.

NATIONS ON THE LAKES, AND UPPER PART OF THE MISSISSIPPI.

Chippoways—Are divided into three bands, one in a village on an island in Leech lake; another about the head of the Mississippi, and around Red lake, and the third on Red river, of lake Winipec, and about the mouth of Pemberton river. They wander along the lakes, however, to a great distance. They are the inveterate enemies of the Sioux; with whom they have been at war time immemorial. Their country is tolerably well covered with wood, but abounds with morasses and lakes.

Algonquins—Speak the same language with the Chippoways, and live in two bands, one on the south side of Rainy lake, Rainy lake river, and the lake

of the Woods; the other about the mouths of the Assineboin and Red rivers.

Knistenoos.—Descendants of the Chippoways—on the head of the Assineboin, thence towards the Saskashawin. They might be induced to trade at an establishment on the Missouri, at the mouth of the Yellow Stone river.

INDIANS, SOUTH OF THE MISSOURI AND ARKANSAS.

A very numerous race, who have as yet but little intercourse with the whites. They are badly armed, and much at the mercy of the other Indians, by whom they are made slaves when taken prisoners. They are also called Camanches. They wander about the heads of the Platte, and in the vast plains bordering on New Mexico and New Spain, south of the Arkansas; and are divided into many bands. They possess an immense number of horses, asses, and mules.

Crow Indians—On the Yellow Stone, and heads of the Missouri; they are divided into a number of small bands.

Paunch Indians—Wander along the Rocky mountains, and sometimes venture across. Probably a band of the Snake Indians. The *Padoucas*, *Kiowways*, &c. are probably bands of nations already enumerated; inhabit an arid, unproductive country.

Caddoquis.—Thirty-five miles west of the main branch of Red river, 120 miles by land above Natchitoches, formerly lived 375 miles higher up, at a beautiful prairie, which has a lake of clear water. The nation is small, but the warriors greatly celebrated for their courage, and as much respected by their neighbors, as the Knights of Malta were in Europe.

Yattasces.—Fifty miles above Natchitoches on Bayou Pierre, there is a small French settlement. They are only a remnant, but live in a fixed village.

Nau-do-ques—On the Sabine, sixty or seventy miles from the Yattasces. The French had formerly a factory here—language Caddo.

Addaize—Forty miles from Natchitoches—below the Yattasces; language peculiar—extremely difficult to speak.

Eyish—Near Nacogdoches—nearly exterminated a few years ago by the small pox—language peculiar, but speak Caddo.

Kyis—On the Trinity river, near where the road to St. Antonio crosses it. Language peculiar.

Tachees—On a branch of the Sabine—language Caddo—gave their name to the province of Texas.

Nabadaches—In the same neighborhood.

Beddies—On the Trinity, about sixty miles south of the Nacogdoches; speak Caddo, but have a peculiar language.

Accokesaus—Two hundred miles south west of Nacogdoches, on the west side of the Colerado—speak a peculiar language—wander about the bay of St. Bernard.

Mayes—On the bay of St. Bernard, near the Guadaloupe—hate the Spaniards, and are attached to the French—have a tradition of the landing of La Salle in this neighborhood—speak Attakapas.

Carankouas—On an island or peninsula in the bay of St. Bernard, ten miles long and five broad—at war with the Spaniards—a peculiar language.

Cances—A very numerous nation; consisting of a number of tribes, who occupy the country from the bay of St. Bernard, across Grand River, towards a Vera Cruz.—On bad terms with the Spaniards—speak a peculiar language.

Tankaways—A wandering people, near the Rio Grande, and at war with the Spaniards.

Tawakenoes—On the Brassos de Dios—for some months at the Prairie of the Tortuga—usual residence 200 miles west of Nacogdoches, towards Santa Fee; speak Pani, or *Towiache.*

Pani, or Towiache—Eight hundred miles above Natchitoches, 340 by land. Much diminished six or eight years ago by the small pox.

Natchitoches—Formerly resided where the town of Natchitoches is now situated; have always been friendly to the whites. They have dwindled away to a few warriors.

Boluxas—Emigrants from Pensacola; they came with a few French families, are not more than thirty in number. There are, besides, several small bands or parties, originally from Florida, the *Appalaches*, on Bayou Rapide; *Alibamas*, in Oppelousas; *Conchatas*, of the same nation with the Alibamas, emigrated to the Sabine about fifteen years ago; *Pacanas*, a small tribe who live on the Qulequeshoe river, which heads south west of Natchitoches. *Pascagolas*, live in a small village sixty miles above Natchitoches. *Tunicas*,, at Avoyall, emigrants from Bayou Tunica. All these nations speak the Mobilian, which was formerly the court language amongst the Indian nations of Lower Louisiana. There are, besides, a number of small bands of *Chactas*, on Bayou Bœuf, on the Teche, and on the Sabine.

Oppelousas—In the Indian language means black head, or scull. They are aborigines of this district.

Attakapas—Signifies man-eater. They at present reside with the Carankouas on an island in the bay of St. Bernard. They have the reputation of being to this day anthropophagi. A French writer, who

who published a book on Louisiana in 1713, of the name of Dumont, relates a fact of two white men who fell into their hands, one of whom was killed and eaten, the other made his escape.

Tensas—Emigrants from the Tensa, and Bayou Bœuf.

Washas, formerly a considerable nation, now extinct, lived near New Orleans, and were the first with whom the French became acquainted.

Arkansas—South of the Arkansas village; descended from the Osage. The Houmas and Avoyall extinct.

INDIANS ON THE MISSISSIPPI, BETWEEN THE MISSOURI AND THE FALLS OF ST. ANTHONY.

Ayuwas—Descended from the Missouris, and claim the country west of them. Have a village on the riviere des Moines, south east side, but are generally wandering.

Saukees—One hundred and forty leagues above St. Louis. Trade with the merchants from Michilimackinac and St. Louis. Live with the Foxes, and may be considered as identified with those people. The country which they claim lies principally on the east side of the Mississippi. On the west side they claim the country of the ancient Missouris by right of conquest, without defining any portion to the Ayuwas. To them may be ascribed the destruction of the Piorias, Kaskaskias, Cahokias, Missouris, and Illinois.

CHAP. IX.

View of the country on the Columbia.

But little is yet known of this extensive section of our continent; it is certain, that it is on a much larger scale than the tract east of the Alleghanies to the Atlantic, but it must be admitted, that its relative position with the rest of the world, (except as to the East Indies) is much less advantageous. Its remoteness from any European country or settlement, will discourage the establishment of colonies. Before its colonization can be effected, the same obstacles as were encountered by nearly all the colonists in America, must be overcome, and perhaps still greater.

This tract differs from that east of the Alleghany in one respect, and which is of considerable moment; it does not open to the ocean by fine bays, and by large navigable rivers, crossing it parallel to each other. The cause of this difference principally arises from a chain of mountains, until after flowing towards each other, the one a thousand, and the other nearly fifteen hundred miles, they break through the ridge before mentioned, and find their way to the sea, uniting their waters about sixty miles from it. The other rivers which rise in the Rocky mountains, instead of falling into the sea, become tributary either to the Multnomak or the Columbia.

Next to the Mississippi, this river and its tributaries, water a greater extent of country than any river of our continent, not even excepting the St. Lawrence. The distance from the source of the Columbia, to that of the Multnomak, which rises with the Colerado of California, is not less than two thousand miles. The Multnomak was not discovered by Lewis and Clarke when descending the Columbia, its entrance being concealed by an island; on re-ascending the Columbia, those celebrated travellers were astonished at the sight of a noble river little inferior to the principal stream.

The lands immediately in the vicinity of Columbia, are represented as rich and highly susceptible of cultivation; but the country in general is too open, and deficient in wood. The climate is more temperate than the same latitudes in the United States. Near the sea, however, there prevails almost continued fog, and drizzling showers of rain, which render it extremely disagreeable.

The natives on the Columbia and its branches are very numerous. General Clark informed me that their numbers might be safely estimated at eighty thousand souls.

The route taken by Lewis and Clarke across the mountains, was, perhaps, the very worst that could have been selected. Mr. Henry, a member of the Missouri company, and his hunters, have discovered several passes, not only very practicable, but even in their present state, less difficult than those of the Alleghany mountains. These are considerably south of the source of Jefferson river. It is the opinion of the gentleman last mentioned, that loaded horses, or even waggons, might in its present state go in the course of six or eight days, from a navigable point

on the Columbia, more easy than between those on the heads of the Ohio, and the Atlantic states. Mr. Henry wintered in a delightful country, on a beautiful navigable stream.

An attempt is now making to form establishments on the Columbia, with what success, is not yet much known. This has been undertaken by a company in the city of New York, at the head of which we find Jacob Astor. Two vessels were despatched for the mouth of the river, we are informed, with orders to commence an establishment. A party of about eighty men under the command of Wilson P. Hunt, and a brother of sir Alexander M'Kensie, who was formerly in the employment of the north west company, has proceeded across the mountains. The principal object of the company at present, seems to be the establishment of a fur trade direct with China. The valuable sea otter, and the fine furs which may be obtained in this country in great quantities, will undoubtedly produce considerable profits. Whether the returns could be introduced into the United States across the Rocky mountains, to any advantage, might be worthy of experiment. A shortening of the distance, by more than a thousand leagues, will certainly make it an object, to lessen the expense and difficulty of transporting goods across the mountains, and down the Missouri. It is worthy of consideration, that articles usually imported from the East Indies are not of great bulk, or weight, that a small compass will include goods of great value. Hence this transportation will be attended with much less difficulty.

There can be little doubt but that the United States have the best claim to the country watered by the Columbia, at least of the greater part. If not as

a part of Louisiana, yet by the right of discovery, universally acknowledged by European nations, with respect to this continent. We have, besides, exercised various acts of ownership over it, and the colony at present forming, is under the protection and license of our government.

CHAP. X.

Antiquities in the Valley of the Mississippi.

Considerable curiosity has been excited by appearances on the Mississippi and its tributary waters, supposed to prove a more ancient and advanced population, than the state of the country, or the character of the tribes inhabiting it, when first visited by Europeans, would seem to indicate. I need make no apology for devoting a chapter to a subject, which has been dignified by the pens of Mr. Jefferson, of Dr. Barton, and a Bishop Madison. Yet, with all possible deference to these respectable names, I cannot but think their theories founded on a very imperfect acquaintance with these remains: having never themselves visited any but the least considerable, and but few having been described by others with accuracy. The subject is still new, and opens a wide field for interesting and amusing speculation.

Some writers, without considering the astonishing number and variety of these remains, have attributed them to a colony of Welsh, or Danes, who are supposed to have found their way by some accident to this country, about the ninth century. Without recurring to the reasoning of Dr. Robertson against the probability of such a colony, I will boldly assert, that it is absolutely impossible that they could have gained such a footing as these vestiges indicate, without at the same time, leaving others less equivo-

cal. The fortifications in the western country, are devoid of those marks which have characterised the European mode of fortifying almost time immemorial; they are mere enclosures, without angles or bastions, and seldom surrounded by a ditch. The place is usually such as convenience would dictate, or as is best adapted to the ground: two miles below Pittsburgh, on a kind of promontory called M'Kee's rocks, nearly inaccessible on three sides, there is a fortification formed by a single line on the land side. They are sometimes, it is true, laid off with regularity, in the form of a parallellogram, semicircle, or square, but most commonly they are irregular.

We are often tempted by a fondness for the marvellous, to seek out remote and improbable causes, for that which may be explained by the most obvious. In the eagerness to prove the existence of the Welsh colony, by attributing to them these remains, we forget that the natives of the country when first discovered by Europeans, were universally in the habit of fortifying. In the early wars of the New England colonists with the Indians, we are informed, that Philip, chief of the Niphet tribe, defended himself in a fort which he had constructed, and sufficiently large to contain two thousand men. Charlevoix, du Pratz, and others, relate the particulars of several sieges. A fortification is one of the first things that would naturally suggest itself in a war, they have been known to all people, the same mind which would invent means of protection for the person of a single individual, would also devise the means of security to large bodies of men. It is no difficult matter to account for the disuse of fortifications amongst the Indians, when we take into view the incredible

diminution of their numbers, and the little use of their forts against the whites; yet in the two last sieges of monsieur Perier, in the war of the Natchez (1729,) that unfortunate people, were able to withstand the approaches and cannon of the enemy for nearly two months.

Imlay, in his fanciful description of Kentucky, asserts, that the Indians were not acqnainted with the use of fortifications. It is not likely that they should have escaped the notice of the French travellers, who have been more curious than any others in what relates to the natives, and yet we find no mention of these remains in their writings, a proof that they had no doubt of their origin. Carver, I believe, was the first to notice these remains, and to regard them as beyond the ingenuity of the natives. On my voyage up the Missouri, I observed the ruins of several villages which had been abandoned twenty or thirty years, and which, in every respect, resembled the vestiges on the Ohio and Mississippi, and at the Arikara and Mandan villages, I found them surrounded by palisades. I entertaiu no doubt bnt that these vestiges are nothing more than the ruins of pallisadoed towns or villages, and not mere fortifications. This custom of pallisadoing, appears to have been general among the northern tribes; it is mentioned by the earliest travellers. In the library of New-Orleans, I found two works at present out of print, which contributed in removing all doubt from my mind; the one is by Lafiteau, a learned Jesuit, and which is sometimes quoted by Dr. Robertson, the other is a singular mixture of fable and fact, by La Honton, published 1678, before the discovery of the Mississippi in its full extent. The writer pretends to have travelled on the part which is above the Missouri.

Both these works contain a number of curious engravings, in which, amongst other things, the fortified towns are represented.

That no Welsh nation exists at present on this continent, is beyond a doubt. Dr. Barton has taken great pains to ascertain the language spoken by the tribes, east of the Mississippi, and the Welsh finds no place amongst them; since the cession of Louisiana, the tribes west of the Mississippi have been sufficiently known; we have had intercourse with them all, but no Welsh are yet found. In the year 1798, a young Welshman of the name of Evans, ascended the Missouri, in company with Mackey, and remained two years in that country; he spoke both the ancient and modern Welsh, and addressed himself to every nation between that river and New Spain, but found no Welshmen. When we reflect upon the difficulties that such a colony would have to encounter amidst ferocious savages, is it probable, that isolated and unassisted, they could have been able to exist? The history of all the European establishments, inform us, that they were opposed by the natives with great ferocity. The Welsh would certainly form considerable establishments, or be totally annihilated; to exist in a distinct and separate tribe, without preserving any of their arts, and without gaining a superiority over the Indians, but on the contrary adopting their manners, is absolutely impossible.

Besides the fortifications, there are other remains scattered throughout the western country, much more difficult to account for, and to which the Welsh can lay no claim. It is worthy of observation, that all these vestiges invariably occupy the most eligible situations for towns or settlements; and on the Ohio

and Mississippi, they are most numerous and considerable. There is not a rising town or a farm of an eligible situation, in whose vicinity some of them may not be found. I have heard it observed by a very intelligent man, a surveyor of public lands, that wherever any of these remains were met with, he was sure to find an extensive body of fertile soil. An immense population has once been supported in this country. These vestiges may be classed under three different heads: 1*st*, the walled towns or fortifications, of which I have already spoken; 2*d*, barrows, or places of interment; 3*d*, mounds or pyramids.

2. Barrows, such as described by Mr. Jefferson, are extremely numerous in every part of the western country. The traces of a village may be always found near them, and they have been used exclusively as places of interment, at least of deposit for the dead. The height is usually eight or ten feet above the surrounding ground, the shape manifesting little or no design. These accumulations may be attributed to the custom prevalent amongst the American tribes, of collecting the bones of such as expired at a distance from their homes, in battle or otherwise; and at stated periods consigning them to some common tomb. The barrows were not the only receptacles: caverns were also used, and places, which, from an unusual appearance, were considered the residence of Manitoos or spirits.

3. The mounds or pyramids appear to me to belong to a period different from the others. They are much more ancient, and are easily distinguished from the barrows, by their size and the design which they manifest. Remains of palisadoed towns are found in their vicinity, which may be accounted for

from the circumstance of the mounds occupying the most eligible situations for villages, or from the veneration of the Indians, for whatever appears extraordinary. From the growth of trees on some of them, they show an antiquity of at least several hundred years. The Indians have no tradition as to the founders of them, though there is no doubt but that when we first became acquainted with those people, they were used as places of defence. The old chief of the Kaskaskia Indians, told Mr. Rice Jones, that in the wars of his nation with the Iroquois, the mounds in the American bottom were used as forts. In one of the plates of Lafiteau's work, there is a representation of an attack on an Indian fort, which is evidently constructed upon one of the mounds: its form is circular, the enclosure of large pickets, and heavy beams on the outside, extending to the ground on which the mound stands. Those inside defend themselves with stones, arrows, &c. while the assailants are either aiming their arrows at such as appear above the wall, or endeavoring to set fire to the pickets. Until I saw this engraving, I had frequently doubted whether these elevations of earth were intended for any other purpose, than places of interment for their great chiefs, or as sites for temples. These were probably the first objects, but experience, at the same time, taught them that they might also answer as forts; perhaps the veneration for these sacred places might induce the Indians, when invaded, to make their final stand in their temples, which therefore, become strong holds. This is conformable to the history of most nations of the world, and particularly with that of the conquest of Mexico, where according, to Bernal Diaz, the letters of Cortez, and to Clavigno, the natives defend-

ed their pyramids as the last refuge. Solis, in his animated and eloquent, though somewhat fabulous history, says, that the pyramid of Cholula was so crouded with warriors, that it looked like a living hill, *una monte vivante.*

The mounds at Grave creek and Marietta have been minutely described, but in point of magnitude they fall far short of others which I have seen; the most remarkable, are two groups of mounds or pyramids, the one about ten miles above Cohokia, the other nearly the same distance below it, which in all, exceed one hundred and fifty, of various sizes. The western side, also, contains a considerable number. A more minute description of those above Cohokia, which I visited, will give a tolerable idea of them all.

I crossed the Mississippi at St. Louis, and after passing through the wood which borders the river, about half a mile in width, entered an extensive open plain. In fifteen minutes, I found myself in the midst of a group of mounds, mostly of a circular shape, and at a distance, resembling enormous hay-stacks scattered through a meadow. One of the largest which I ascended, was about two hundred paces in circumference at the bottom, the form nearly square, though it had evidently undergone considerable alteration from the washing of the rains. The top was level, with an area sufficient to contain several hundred men.

The prospect from this mound is very beautiful; looking towards the bluffs, which are dimly seen at the distance of six or eight miles, the bottom at this place being very wide, I had a level plain before me, varied by *islets* of wood, and a few solitary trees; to the right, the prairie is bounded by the horizon, to

the left, the course of the Cahokia may be distinguished by the margin of wood upon its banks, and crossing the valley diagonally south, south west. Around me, I counted twenty mounds, or pyramids, besides a great number of small artificial elevations; these mounds form something more than a semicircle, about a mile in extent, its diameter formed by the river.

Pursuing my walk along the bank of the Cohokia, I passed eight others in the distance of three miles, before I arrived at the principal assemblage. When I reached the foot of the largest mound, I was struck with the degree of astonishment, not unlike that which is experienced in contemplating the Egyptian pyramids; and could not help exclaiming, what a stupendous pile of earth! To heap up such a mass must have required years, and the labors of thousands. It stands immediately on the bank of the Cohokia, and on the side next it, is covered with lofty trees. Were it not for the regularity and design which it manifests, the circumstance of its being on alluvial ground, and the other mounds scattered around it, we could scarcely believe it the work of human hands, in a country which we have, generally believed never to have been inhabited by any but a few lazy Indians. The shape is that of a parallelogram, standing from north to south; on the south side there is a broad apron or step, about half way down, and from this, another projection into the plain about fifteen feet wide, which was probably intended as an ascent to the mound. By stepping round the base I computed the circumference to be at least six hundred yards, and the height of the mound about ninety feet. The step, or apron, has been used as a kitchen garden, by the monks of La

Trappe, and the top is sowed with wheat. Nearly west there is one of a smaller size, and fifteen others scattered through the plain. Two are also seen on the bluffs, at the distance of three miles. Several of these mounds are almost conical. As the sward had been burnt, the earth was perfectly naked, and I could trace with ease, any unevenness of surface, so as to discover whether it was artificial or accidental. I every where observed a great number of small elevations of earth, to the height of a few feet, at regular distances from each other, and which appeared to observe some order; near them I also observed pieces of flint, and fragments of earthen vessels.

I was perfectly satisfied that here once existed a city similar to those of Mexico, described by the first conquerors. Although it might not have been a Licopolis, Persepolis or Thebes, it is not improbable that it contained many thousand inhabitants. This plain, now reposing in the stillness of death, was once the scene of a busy and crouded population; those temples now devoted to the idolaters of silence, once resounded with shouts of war or the songs of peace. The mounds were site of temples, or monuments to the great men. It is evident, this could never have been the work of thinly scattered tribes. If the human species had at any time been permitted in this country to have increased freely, and there is every probability of the fact, it must, as in Mexico, have become astonishingly numerous. The same space of ground would have sufficed to maintain fifty times the number of the present inhabitants, with ease; their agriculture having no other object than mere sustenance. Amongst a numerous population, the power of the chief must necessarily

be more absolute, and where there are no laws, degenerate into despotism. This was the case in Mexico, and in the nations of South America; a great number of individuals were at the disposal of the chief, who treated them little better than slaves. The smaller the society, the greater the consequence of each individual. Hence, there would not be wanting a sufficient number of hands to erect mounds or pyramids.

Hunter and Dunbar describe a mound at the junction of the Catahoula, Washita and Tensa rivers, very similar in shape to the large one on the Cohokia. This I have also visited. It has a step or apron, and is surrounded by a group of ten or twelve other mounds of a smaller size. In the vicinity of New Madrid, there are a number; one on the bank of a lake, is at least four hundred yards in circumference, and surrounded by a ditch at least ten feet wide, and at present, five feet deep; it is about forty feet in height, and level on the top. I have frequently examined the mounds at St. Lewis: they are situated on the second bank just above the town, and disposed in a singular manner; there are nine in all, and form three sides of a parallelogram, the open side towards the country, being protected, however, by three smaller mounds, placed in a circular manner. The space enclosed is about four hundred yards in length, and two hundred in breadth. About six hundred yards above there is a single mound, with a broad stage on the river side; it is thirty feet in height, and one hundred and fifty in length; the top is a mere ridge of five or six feet wide. Below the first mounds there is a curious work, called the Falling Garden. Advantage is taken of the second bank, nearly fifty feet in height at this place,

and three regular stages or steps, are formed by earth brought from a distance. This work is much admired—it suggests the idea of a place of assembly for the purpose of counselling, on public occasions.

In tracing the origin of institutions or inventions amongst men, we are apt to forget, that there is, however, diversified by manners and languages, no difference of species, that consequently the same institutions may originate amongst twenty different people; the bee and the ant have the same instinct in whatever part of the globe they may be found. Adair takes great pains to prove a similarity of customs between the American tribes and the Jews; Lafiteau, with great learning, shews the existence of a still greater number common to the Greeks and Romans. The result to the philosophic mind is no more than this, that the American tribes belong to the human race, and that men, without any intercourse with each other, will, in innumerable instances, fall upon the same modes of acting. The wonder would be, that they should not shew a resemblance. Man is every where found in societies, under governments, addicted to war, hunting, or agriculture, and fond of dances, shows, and distinction. Perhaps the first employment of a numerous population when not engaged in war, would be in heaping up piles of earth, the rudest and most common species of human labor. We find these mounds in every part of the globe; in the north of Europe, and in Great Britain, they are numerous, and much resemble ours, but less considerable. The pyramids or mounds of Siberia bear a surprising resemblance to those of the United States. There is this to be remarked, however, that the Russian remains are found in the districts of the wandering tribes, whereas, in the vast plains west of

of the Mississippi they are rarely encountered. It might be a curious inquiry, why in those regions, at present so thinly inhabited as Tartary and Siberia, these remains, which indicate a fixed population, should be chiefly found. It is fashionable to account for these things by the supposed revolutions of this earth; perhaps the most rational mode of accounting for them, is by our own ignorance. The pyramids of Egypt are perhaps the oldest monuments of human labor in that country, so favorable to the production of a numerous population. The pyramids of Mexico, which are but little known, and yet scarcely less considerable, like those of Egypt have their origin hid in the night of oblivion. Humboldt is of opinion, that "these edifices must be classed with the pyramidal monuments of Asia, of which traces were found even in Arcadia; for the conical mausoleum of Calistus was a true tumulus, covered with fruit trees, and served for a base to a small temple consecrated to Diana." The Greeks, who were successful in the chariot races at the Olympic games, to shew their gratitude to their horses, gave them an honourable burial, and even erected pyramids over their graves. The great altar of Jupiter, at Olympia, was nothing more than a huge mound of earth, with stone steps to ascend. Humboldt remarks with astonishment, the striking similarity of the Asiatic and Egyptian pyramids, to those of Mexico. The similarity of those which he describes, to the mounds or pyramids on the Mississippi, is still more striking, but not a matter of so much wonder. The only difference is, that a few of the Mexican pyramids are larger, and some appear to have been faced with stone or brick. Like those of Mexico, wherever there has been a considerable town, we find

two large pyramids, supposed to represent the sun and moon, and a number of smaller ones, to represent the stars. There is very little doubt but that they originated with the same people, for they may be considered as existing in the same country.—What is the distance between Red river and the northern part of the intendancy of Vera Cruz, in which the pyramid of Papantla is situated? little more than ten or fifteen days journey. Even supposing there were no mounds in the intermediate space, the distance is not such, as to preclude the probability of intercourse. There is no obstruction in the way; a coach and four has been driven from Mexico to Nacogdoches.

The Mexican histories give uncertain accounts of the origin of those works, nor are the antiquarians able to form any satisfactory hypothesis. They are attributed by some to the Toultec nation, as far back as the ninth century, who emigrated to Mexico from the north, perhaps from the banks of the Mississippi; and by others, to the Olmec nation, still more ancient, who came to Mexico from the east. A curious discovery, made a few years ago in the state of Tennessee, proves beyond a doubt, that at some remote period the valley of the Mississippi had been inhabited by a much more civilized people, than when first known to us. Two human bodies were found in a copperas cave, in a surprising state of preservation. They were first wrapped up in a kind of blanket, supposed to have been manufactured of the lint of nettles, afterwards with dressed skins, and then a mat of nearly sixty yards in length. They were clad in a beautiful cloth, interwoven with feathers, such as was manufactured by the Mexicans. The flesh had become hard, but the features were well

preserved. They had been here, perhaps, for centuries, and certainly were of a different race from the modern Indians. They might have belonged to the Olmec, who overran Mexico about the seventh century, to the Toultec, who came centuries afterwards, or to the Aztecs, who founded the great city of Mexico, in the thirteenth century.

These subjects can only bewilder; every nation, in tracing back its history, must finally lose itself in fable. The Aztec (Mexican) mode of preserving their chronicles, must necessarily have been defective; the Egyptians could lay but little better claim to authenticity. The simple fact of the emigration to the country of the Olmecs, or Toultecs, may be relied on, but as to the time and circumstances, we must look for very slender accounts. It is only since the invention of letters that we can form a well grounded hope of the permanency of human institutions, of the certainty of history, and of the uninterrupted progress of improvements. Had this noble invention been unknown, how many of our most useful arts would have been lost during that night of barbarism, called the dark ages!

A French writer has fancifully observed, that civilization arises, *de la fermentation dune nombreuse peuplade*, and that it would be as idle to expect this result without a numerous population, as to think of making wine by the fermentation of a single grape. Experience shews, that a numerous population will always be attended with some degree of improvement, because, as Mr. Jefferson observes, the chances of improvement are multiplied. It is not without reason that the Creator gave his command to increase and multiply, since many of the intellectual faculties would not otherwise be completely unfold-

ed. It is not every country, however, which can of itself attain the full extent of the population of which it may be rendered susceptible. In unfriendly soils and climates, nature must be forced by the arts and labours of agriculture, to afford sustenance for a numerous population. The inhabitants of such have therefore been usually found in wandering tribes, unable to *originate* their own civilization. A mighty warrior, at the head of his own tribe, might subdue the tribes around him, and form a little empire, and peace being secured to a great proportion of his subjects, their numbers would increase, but it would fall into fragments, long before the useful arts could be invented.

It has ever been in the mildest climates, gifted by nature with plenty, that civilization has had its origin. Egypt and fruitful Asia, first became possessed of a numerous population, and first cultivated the arts and sciences. In America civilization first appears ed, in similar climates, where nature, with little help from man, produces abundance of food. In both the old and the new world, the celestial spark kindled in those happy climes, would be carried to less favored regions. But the human race has every where experienced terrible revolutions. Pestilence, war, and the convulsions of the globe, have annihilated the proudest works, and rendered vain the noblest efforts. Ask not the sage, by whom, and when, were erected those lingering ruins, the "frail memorials" of ages which have long since been swallowed up in the ocean of time; ask not the wild Arab, where may be found the owner of the superb palace, within whose broken walls he casts his tent; ask not the poor fisherman, as he spreads his nets, or the ploughman, who whistles over the ground.

where is Tyre, where is Troy, of whose splendor, historians and poets have so much boasted! Alas! "they have vanished from the things that be," and have left but the melancholy lesson, of the instability of the most stupendous labors, and the vanity of immortality on earth!

In the wanderings of fancy, I have sometimes conceived this hemisphere, like the other, to have experienced the genial ray of civilization, and to have been inhabited by a numerous, polite, and enlightened people.* Why may not great revolutions have been experienced in America? Is it certain, that Mexico, Peru and Chili, when first visited by Europeans, exhibited only the dawn of civilization? Perhaps it was the fiftieth approach doomed to suffer a relapse, before the sacred flame could be extended to other portions of the continent: perhaps, at some

*Plato, in one of his dialogues, speaks of a people, who had come from the Atlantic in great numbers, and overrun the greater part of Europe and Asia. Many circumstances related of the island of the Atlantic, correspond with America. This occurrence, to which Plato alludes, was considered of great antiquity, and preserved by obscure tradition. The island was said to have been sunk by an earthquake. The fact is certain, that amongst the Greeks, there prevailed a belief of the existence of another continent, in the Atlantic ocean, and inhabited by a powerful people, who, in remote antiquity, had invaded the old world. Amongst the Romans, who borrowed the greater part of their learning from the Greeks, the same belief prevailed. Seneca has this remarkable passage: "In ages to come, the seas will be traversed, and in spite of the wind and waves, avarice and pride will discover a New World, and Thule shall be no longer considered the extreme part of the globe." Mons. Peyroux, has in a very ingenious essay, rendered it even probable, that the ancients had been acquainted with America in very remote antiquity. Plato places the destruction of the Atlantides, at nine thousand years before his time.

distant period the flame had been widely spread, and again extinguished by the common enemies of the human race. But I am asked, if this had been the case, should we not see indubitable proofs, in the remains of antiquity, edifices of stone, mines, and laborious works of human hands. I answer, that nature is ever laboring to restore herself, she is ever engaged in replacing in its primitive state, whatever changes the hand of man may effect in her appearance. Excavations of the earth would be filled up by the hand of time, and piles of stone when separated from the living rock, would crumble into dust. America may have been less fortunate than Europe in those happy inventions which serve in some measure to perpetuate improvements, and yet, in some of the arts, she may have attained a greater excellence. The character of her civilization may have been different from any of which we have a knowledge, and her relapse produced by causes of which we can form no conjecture.

Who will assign, as the age of America, a period of years different from that allowed to, what has been denominated, the old world? A multiplicity of proofs contradict the recency of her origin; deeply imbedded stores of carbonated wood, the traces of ancient volcanoes! I could appeal on this subject to her time-worn cataracts, and channels of mighty rivers, and to her venerable mountains, which rose when the Creator laid the foundations of the earth! When the eye of Europe first beheld her, did she appear but lately to have sprung from the deep? No, she contained innumerable and peculiar plants and animals, she was inhabited by millions of men, possessing different languages, manners and appear-

ances. Grant then, that America may have existed a few thousand years; the same causes prevailing, like effects will be produced; the same revolutions as have been known in the old world may have taken place here.

Before the invention of letters, there would be a constant succession of advances to civilization, and of relapses to barbarism. The Chaldeans, through the glimmer of ancient history, are represented to us as the first inventors of the arts; but may not those people have been preceded by the same revolutions as have succeeded them. In long and arduous advances, they might attain to great height in civilization, and wars, pestilence, or other calamities, precipitate them to the state of the barbarian or the savage. It is true, the traces of art would long remain undefaced; but they would not remain *forever*: Time would obliterate them.

> "He grasp'd a hero's antique bust,
> The marble crumbled into dust,
> And sunk beneath the shade."—*Selleck Osborne.*

VIEWS OF LOUISIANA.

IN THREE BOOKS.

BOOK II.

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CHAPTER I.

General description of the Territory of Missouri—settlement—rivers, &c.

The territory of Missouri, is bounded on the south by the state of Louisiana, or the 33d deg. of latitude, which crosses the Mississippi about one hundred and fifty miles below the Arkansas. All that is not contained within the limits of the state of Louisiana, is now considered as belonging to this vast territory, but in order to distinguish between the country possessed by us and that still held by the Indians, I will adopt the boundary agreed on by treaty with the neighbouring nations. Beyond it the Indian agent and the territorial governor, have a general superintendance, but the civil authority does not exert its jurisdiction. The line of the Osage purchase, commences at the Black Rock, about three hundred miles up the Missouri, and runs due south to the Arkansas. On the north side of the Missouri

a line was agreed on with the Sacs and Foxes, beginning opposite the Gasconade river and striking the Mississippi at the mouth of Jeffrion river. It is unnecessary to mention that the Mississippi forms the eastern boundary.

This embraces an extent of country nearly twice as large as the state of Pennsylvania, and which contains a much greater proportion of tillable land. The section north of the Missouri, and the one south of the Arkansas, are each sufficient to form a considerable state; but the Osage purchase, constitutes the principal body of the territory, and may be justly considered, next to the state of Louisiana, the most valuable tract in the great valley of the Mississippi.

A description of the principal rivers, with some account of the portions of country watered by them, will give some view of this tract: reserving the tract including the settlements for a more minute description.

White river.—This fine river was little known until lately; it is one of the most considerable in the western country, and will one day be important. It was thought to be a stream of very inconsiderable magnitude, until explored by captain Many, of the United States' army, and rendered known from settlements made on it, and from wandering hunters. It rises in the Black mountains, which separate the waters of the Arkansas from those of the Missouri and Mississippi. Several of its branches interlock with those of the Osage river, the Maramek, and the St. Francis. It is navigable according to the computation of several hunters with whom I have conversed, about twelve hundred miles, without any considerable interruption; eight hundred of these

may be made with barges, the rest with canoes, or smaller boats. The waters of this river are clear and limpid, the current gentle, and even in the driest season, plentifully supplied from the numerous and excellent springs which are every where found. It is not less remarkable for the many considerable rivers which it receives in its course. Black river is the largest of these; it enters on the north east side, about four hundred miles up, and is navigable nearly five hundred miles, receiving a number of handsome rivers, as the Current, Eleven Point, and Spring rivers. The last merits a more particular description. It issues forth, suddenly, from an immense spring, two hundred yards in width, affording an uninterrupted navigation to its mouth, contracting its width, however, to fifty or sixty yards. It is about fifty miles in length.* This spring is full of the finest fish; bass, perch, pike, and others common in the western rivers. Besides this river, White river receives several others from one hundred and fifty to three hundred miles in length; as *Eaux Cache*, James river, *Rapid John*, and others known by various names.

The country watered by this river has only been traversed by Indians and hunters, and may be considered as still unexplored. It is spoken of with rapture by those who have seen it; it is described as being generally well wooded, and uncommonly abundant in springs and rivulets. The soil is said to be rich, though there are some places hilly and broken; some of the hills might be more properly termed mountains. A hunter described to me three high and remarkable hills, about eight hundred miles up

* A town or village has been lately commenced at the mouth of this river.

the river, standing on a plain, and perfectly unconnected with any ridge. They are each about a quarter of a mile in length, their form oblong; two stand parallel and the third transversely; at a distance, giving the appearance of three walls of some immense building. It has been called Jupiter's palace. Hunters agree in declaring that on the waters of this river, a country may be chosen, at least one hundred miles square, not surpassed by the best parts of Kentucky, and one of the best for settlements in the western world.

St. Francis—Discharges itself into the Mississippi, seventy-five miles above White river, and would be navigable but for rafts which impede its course, for nine hundred miles. The western branch rises with the waters of White river, and the eastern, which is the principal, interlocks with Big river, of the Maramek. It is very erroneously laid down on the common maps; its general course is much further east: the principal branch in fact, runs nearly parallel with the Mississippi in its whole length, and seldom recedes more than fifty miles. It is a beautiful and limpid stream, passing through a charming country, but afterwards, though increased in size, by its junction with several other rivers, it flows with a slow and lazy current. The St. Francis communicates with a number of lakes which lie between it and the Mississippi, formed by the streams which flow from the upland country, and lose themselves in the low grounds commencing at Cape Girardeau. This river receives several considerable streams, which rise between it and the Mississippi; the Pemisco has its source near the Big prairie, eight or ten miles north west of New Madrid; but generally, the St. Francis, in high water, overflows its banks

on that side to a great distance. A person, at such times, may easily lose the channel, unless well acquainted with its course. The western bank is generally higher and much less subject to inundation.

Maramek—Is forty miles below the mouth of the Missouri, and heads with the Gasconade and St. Francis. Passes generally through a broken country, the flats mostly narrow. It affords excellent navigation to its source, a distance of more than three hundred miles. The source of this river is considered a curiosity; it is a small lake formed from fountains issuing immediately around the spot. Big river, which winds through the Mine country, is the principal branch.

The Gasconade—Enters the Missouri about one hundred miles up, can be ascended in small boats nearly one hundred miles, but the navigation is not good on account of shoals and rapids. It passes through a hilly country, in which there probably exist mines.

Osage river—Navigation about five hundred miles, though considerably impeded in places by shoals. Enters the Missouri 133 miles up. Principal navigable branches are Nangira, Grand river, the Fork, the Cook's river, Vermillion river. Country bordering, generally high prairie, but the bottoms are fine and sufficiently timbered for settlements. On the Nangira, about twenty miles from its mouth, there is a curious cascade of more than one hundred and fifty feet fall in the distance of four hundred yards; the water issues from a large spring and is precipitated over three different ledges of rocks, and falling to the bottom, is collected into a beautiful basin, from whence, it flows into this river, a considerable stream. A few miles below this place there is a great abundance of iron ore.

CHAP. II.

Description of the country between New Madrid and St. Genevieve.

The boat in which I descended the Ohio, was destined for New Madrid, seventy-five miles below the entrance of this river into the Mississippi. Two young men, fellow passengers, had agreed with me to proceed from that place to St. Genevieve on foot, the distance about one hundred and fifty miles. On our arrival, I had the misfortune to have a disagreeable quarrel with the owner of the boat, who had treated us, it seemed to me, extremely ill. In a strange place, and but a stripling, he endeavoured to crush me, but my lucky stars awarded me a triumph; my adversary was humbled, and I had the satisfaction of self approbation, and the pleasure of having gained the favorable opinion of the respectable part of the society.

The whole morning had passed away amidst wranglings and broils. My companions had already set out, but had promised to wait for me at the first cabin, about eight miles from New Madrid. It was not until towards evening that I was prepared to depart. The clerk of the court, Mr. Humphreys, whose attentions I shall always recollect with gratitude, insisted on my taking his horse, to which I consented. I now bade adieu to the place where I had suffered

much in feeling, and proceeded with the lightness of Telemachus, after his escape from the infernal regions.

It was the twentieth of May. The weather in this latitude, exceedingly warm. As the day declines, however, the air grows cool and fresh. At night the coolness is even such as to render a fire indispensable. On leaving the town, I passed for a mile or two, through a wood of astonishingly luxuriant growth, and over a plain of a loose rich soil, and where there is nothing to vary the scene but the variety of the vegetation. Just as the sun was sinking below the horizon, I entered one of those beautiful glades or natural meadows, which are so often seen in this part of the world, and never without producing an agreeable feeling. The storm of the passions had already subsided in my breast: the objects which had successively caught my attention in jogging along, had calmed my mind, and glad fancy plumed her wing for a flight to scenes of ideal enjoyments and pleasures. In this state of mind, I suddenly emerged from the dark forest; the prairie spread out before me all its enchanting beauties, and fearful of passing too rapidly, I reined my horse. I gazed with delight on the smooth soft grass, on the numerous flowers, on the scattered shrubberies of sumac, with their scarlet berries which preserve their hues until renewed by summer, and on the close embowering woods, by which this garden of the Dryads and Hamadryads, was enclosed as by a wall. How serene the heavenly vault above my head! How rich and varied underneath my feet, the hues and texture of the carpet woven by the fantastic hand of nature! Cold is the heart that does not harmonize

with our universal mother, when her features wea an expression like this.

It was night when I reached the further end of the glade, and then entered a deep forest, where the massy foilage almost shut out the twinkling light of the stars. There was no danger of straying from the road, for the woods are so close as to form a complete hedge. After travelling, as I conjectured, about four miles, I heard the barking of dogs who had discovered my approach; the sound was not disagreeable, as I expected here, to find my companions, and to repose for the night. As I drew near the settlers cabin, I discovered a groupe of persons seated by a large fire, which was burning under an enormous tree. "Here he comes," several voices cried out at once, for it seems they had been expecting me; and the settler coming forward requested me to alight, with an appearance of good will which made me feel that it was sincere. The dogs who were at first very noisy, now whined a kind of welcome as if they would second the hospitality of their master. I gladly excepted the invitation, having been a good deal chilled by the cold night dews. I found my companion seated in the midst of the family, and as much at home as if they formed a part of it. The family consisted of the mother and fourteen children, the eldest apparently about eighteen years of age a blooming girl; the youngest an infant. They were all glowing with health. I made up an acquaintance in a few moments with a half a dozen young rogues, and passed the time agreeably. The innocence, the cheerfulness and content, which prevailed in this charming family, almost seemed to be without alloy. The scene will never fade from my recollection. They were neatly dressed in new cotton cloth, and

had nothing of that wretchedness or poverty, or stupid ignorance, which is but too common in the unfortunate peasantry of most countries. Looking around, I found myself in the midst of the woods; a few trees were felled round the house, which was built of unhewn logs, the interstices not closed up.

The good man having secured my horse in a kind of shed, and given him a bundle of reeds which he had cut, returned to the fire and resumed his seat. I conversed with him on various subjects, and was much surprised at the good sense as well as various information which he possessed. He gave me a brief account of his reasons for settling here. He was a native of Connecticut, had sold a small property, which he owned in the vicinity of Hartford, and had removed to Ohio, with the intention of purchasing a tract of land on which to support his increasing family. But on his arrival, he had found the price beyond his means, after the expenses he was obliged to incur in transporting his family. He had therefore come to the resolution of proceeding to the extreme frontier, and a few months before had reached New Madrid. Here he had followed the example of others, and selected a spot on the public lands, in the hope of being able to make as much by the cultivation of the soil, as would pay for it by the time the office for the sale of the public domain, should be opened. If he should not prove successful, the improvements on the land, would render it more valuable to some one else, and in the mean while, he would be able to support his family. Supper being now announced, we all entered the cabin, where the table was spread, and rough benches placed around it. A tin cup filled with rich milk, was placed before each of us, and cakes of the Indian meal, were

smoking on the board. The good man said grace in a reverend manner, and we did ample justice to the simple and wholesome fare provided for us. Surrounded by health, innocence, and benevolence, who could complain? If Satan himself had come here to plan mischief against these amiable people, and were thus kindly treated, he would have relented.

After supper, we returned to the fire underneath the spreading tree, and whiled away the time in sprightly and mirthful conversation; the Yankee girls were very talkative, the whole family appeared to be delighted with our company in this lonely place, where they so seldom saw any strangers but their neighbours, the bears and wolves. The hour for retiring at length arrived. Our host arose, and addressing himself to us, "gentlemen," said he, "it is the practice of our family to give a half an hour to religious devotion every evening: should you think proper to join us, we will be glad, if not, keep your seats, and excuse us for the present." Who could have declined such an invitation? A Turk would not have harmed them; an Indian—no, the bloody savage would have chosen this sacred moment, to have rushed upon them with the murderous knife. My companions, who were rather loose in their habits and principles, and I, with shame it is confessed, far from being as good as I ought to be, felt a desire to join in the good man's devotions, if not for the first time, at least never with so much sincerity. We again entered the house, where they sung one of Watts' pious hymns, after which, our host poured out a prayer that seemed to flow from the very bottom of his heart. The evening service was concluded by another hymn, after which, it being time to retire to rest, we were shewn up to the

loft, to which we ascended by a ladder. A few blankets and bear skins, had been provided for us; we resigned ourselves to sleep, in the consciousness that even such wretches as we, could not fail of experiencing the care of the protecting angel, set once to guard this charming family from the approach of guile.*

How different the piety of these people from the intolerance of fanaticism? that deadly enemy of religion. Is there a man so depraved and wicked, as not to feel inward involuntary reverence, on approaching the shrine, where with decent humility, the sinner offers, on the altar of his God, the sacrafice of a contrite and grateful heart! But the scorn and derision which the fanactic provokes, gives a wound to religion herself, whose cause he thinks to promote. I trust, that I shall always entertain a just sentiment of whatever tends to lessen the salutary influence of religion: for it is THE SOUL OF SOCIETY. No nation has ever existed without finding it

* Truth compels me to relate some further particulars respecting this interesting family, which will be painful to the reader. The autumn following, I had to visit New Madrid, and anticipated much pleasure in seeing these worthy people. But alas! as I drew near the house, every thing appeared still about it, and on my making a noise, the good man, emaciated to a skeleton, crawled out, and after recognizing, informed me in the most pathetic, yet composed manner, of a train of misfortunes which had befallen him. His whole family had been assailed by violent bilious fevers, his wife and five of his children were no more, and the rest, with the exception of two boys, who were then extremely ill, had been kindly taken away by some of the old settlers, that they might be the better attended to; but, said he, "God's will be done—it is all for the best."—I could have wept like Niobe.

I must also add, that the season was more unhealthy than had been known for twenty years, and that the settler had unfortunately built his cabin on the border of a pond, which became stagnant in summer.

indispensable. To thousands it is the silent and subtle monitor which guides and governs in gentle whispers, where the voice of human law is silent. To millions it is the fountain of bliss, of fortitude, of consolation, of hope, of happiness unspeakable. What shall I say of the mad and impious man who thinks to destroy it? He is worse than the traitor, for he wars not against a form of government, but stabs at the existence of society itself; he is worse than the robber or the murderer, for he steals what riches cannot buy, and destroys an eternal life.

We rose with the sun, and took leave of our kind host, who positively refused to receive any compensation for our entertainment. In two days, we reached Cape Girardeau. As it is not my intention to swell this volume with incidents, I will endeavour to give a general description of the country over which we passed.

About twenty miles below Cape Girardeau, and thirty-five from the mouth of the Ohio, the limestone rock terminates abruptly, and there commences an immense plain, stretching with scarcely any interruption, to the Balize. It is successively traversed by the St. Francis, White river, Arkansas, Washita, and Red river. This flat may be considered, on an average, about thirty miles wide, and with hardly an exception, is without a hill or a stone. The soil is generally rich, and has the appearance of being alluvial, though there is a greater proportion of sand, than is usual, in the neighbourhood of the rivers. It is a common idea, but very erroneous, that this is a continued swamp, or rather low land, subject to inundation. There are doubtless a great many swamps, and lakes, interspersed with the plains; but there are also extensive bodies of land fit for cul-

tivation. The swamps, and wet lands, I think, might be drained without any great difficulty. At some future day, this will be the Flanders of America.

It is worthy of observation, that from the Maramek, to the mouth of the St. Francis, upwards of five hundred miles, no river of any consequence, empties into the Mississippi; the considerable rivers, as the St. Francis, Black river, and Osage, fall to the south west, or to the Missouri. It is therefore probable, that when these countries become settled, the produce, fifty or sixty miles west of the Mississippi, will be carried to market by those channels. In the summer floods, there is an almost continued connection between the lakes east of the St. Francis, by means of these; at that period, a person may go from this river to New Madrid.

Leaving the upland at Cape Girardeau, we enter what has been called the *great swamp:* though it does not properly possess this character. The timber is not such as is usually found in swamps, but fine oak, ash, olive, linn, beech and poplar, of enormous growth. The soil a rich black loam. In the fall, it is nearly dry; the road which passes through, being only muddy in particular spots: but during the season of high water, it is extremely disagreeable crossing it. The horse sinks at every step, to the belly in water and loose soil; and in places entirely covered, the traveller, but for the marks on the trees, would be in danger of losing the road altogether. This swamp is sixty miles in length, and four broad, widening as it approaches the St. Francis. In the season of high water, the Mississippi and the river just mentioned, have a complete connection by means of this low land.

After crossing the swamp, there commences a ridge of high land, running in the same course, and on the Mississippi, bounding what is called Tywapety bottom: this ridge, in approaching the St. Francis westward, subsides. In passing over it, we appear to be in a hilly country, possessing springs and rivulets; the soil, though generally poor and sandy, is tolerably well timbered, and not altogether unfit for tillage.

After passing this high land, we enter again the level plain. The road crosses two lakes, one of which, forms the Bayou St. John, at New Madrid; the other is connected with lakes to the westward. They are four or five feet deep, and several hundred yards wide, with clean sandy bottoms. These lakes are formed by the rivulets of the upland before described; they rise or fall but little. During the fall season, they are the resort of vast numbers of wild fowl, and are full of fish.

The traveller now enters a perfect level, alternately prairie, and beautiful woods of tall oak, walnut, mulberry, sassafras, honey locust, perfectly open, as though planted by art. Those of the shrubby kind, are usually on tracts of ground apart from the groves of larger trees. They are the plum, catalpa, dog wood, spice wood, and the different species of the sumac. The prairies, or natural meadows, are covered with grass and a profusion of flowers. Herds of cattle, of two or three hundred, are seen, and contribute to the pleasure of viewing these natural meads. The *Big prairie*, twenty-five miles from New Madrid, and through which the public road passes is a delightful spot; it is about eight miles long, and four broad, enclosed by woods, and interspersed with beautiful groves, resembling

small islands in a lake. It is not surpassed in beauty the richest meadow, improved with the greatest care. In passing through these prairies I stopped under the shady tree, by the road side, and suffered my horse to feed, while I feasted on strawberries of a superior size and flavor. A number of good farms are scattered round the edges of the prairie, and a few within.

This description may give some idea of the country to the south west as far as the Arkansas. Except, that the prairies are larger, the lakes and the inundations towards the Mississippi more considerable, and every thing on a larger scale. But, it is extremely difficult to give a correct notion of the topography of a country, from bare description; a well regulated map would be indispensably necessary.

The soil of the prairie, is more light and loose than in the woods, and has a greater mixture of sand, but, when wet, assumes every where, a deep black color, and an oily appearance. Judging from the borders of the lakes, and the wells which have been dug, this soil does not seem to be more than three feet deep. But after digging through a stratum of sand, there appears a kind of clay, of a dirty yellow, and of a soapy appearance; this is the substratum of the whole country, and is, perhaps, a kind of marl, the deposit of very ancient alluvia. No stones are met with in any of these wells, that I have heard of.

The greatest objection to this country is the want of fountains and running streams. Water is procured in wells of the depth of twenty-five or thirty feet; but the taste is not agreeable, owing most probably to their being lined with mulberry, which soon decays, and gives its taste to the water.

On the other side of the Big prairie, as we advance to the Mississippi, the soil appears to be stronger, and the vegetation exceedingly luxuriant. Trees are seen of the most towering height, thick underwood, and enormous vines, binding, as it were, those sturdy giants, to the earth, and to each other. To clear those forests, requires an immense labor, but the American settlers usually prefer them, from the superior quality of the land. The creole, on the contrary, generally makes choice of the open ground or prairie. The one, whom scarcely any consideration will persuade to remain long in the same place, chooses a soil which promises to last forever, while the other, who is seldom induced to change, sits down on land that may wear out in a few years.

CHAP. III.

Description of the Country from Cape Girardeau to the Missouri.

NOTWITHSTANDING the variety of beauties, which attract the attention of the traveller, in passing through these low lands, one who has been accustomed "to the pleasant vicissitude of hill and dale," becomes at length wearied with the sameness of the scenery, and experiences a relief, on emerging to the high land at Cape Girardeau. From this place to the Missouri, the country may be called hilly and broken, but with excellent flats, or bottoms, on the creeks and rivulets, of a width usually proportioned to the size of the stream. The river hills of the Mississippi, perhaps from five to ten miles out, are in many places far from being prepossessing. They are badly watered, have many rugged and abrupt acclivities; and considerable precipices on the river. A strange appearance is also given by the number of funnels, or *sink holes*, formed by the washing of the earth into fissures of the limestone rock, on which the country reposes. In other places, flint knobs present themselves, strewed with huge masses of horn stone, and affording a scanty nourishment to a few straggling black jacks, or groves of pine. But it is not to be understood that this forms the greatest proportion of the lands: a

more minute description of particular parts will prove the contrary. Even in these places there is abundance of fine grass, affording excellent pasturage.

For thirty miles above Cape Girardeau, (with the exception of some places near the Mississippi) and extending back to the St. Francis, there is a country not unlike that around the head of the Ohio; though not quite so hilly. The timber nearly the same, hickory, oak, ash, walnut, maple, and well supplied with springs and rivulets.

North of Apple creek, there is a tract on the river, of very unpromising aspect, extending to the Saline, within nine miles of St. Genevieve. It is scarcely fit for tillage, badly watered, with woods of a poor and straggling growth; but to make amends in some degree, for the sterility of the upland, there is a fine bottom (Bois brule) terminating just below the Saline, of twenty miles in length, and on average three in width. In the neighbourhood of the Saline creek the land is exceedingly broken and hilly, though tolerably well timbered, and not altogether unfit for cultivation. On the a'Vase,* there are many fine tracts, and extensive flats.

From St. Genevieve to the Maramek, and extending back, the same description will apply, except that the country is more rough and broken, but generally better watered, being traversed by la riviere Habitation, Big river, the Mineral Fork, the Platin, and the Joachin. In some places the country

* Apple creek, the Saline, and the a'Vase, are considerable streams, which rise, as well as Big river (a branch of the Maramek) and some other streams, in a high ridge, about fifty miles west of the Mississippi, which separates these waters from those of the St. Francis.

is exceedingly wild and romantic. Ledges of limestone rock frequently shew themselves on the sides of hills, forming precipices of twenty or thirty feet high, and have much the appearance of regular and artificial walls. What is somewhat singular, they are generally near the top of the hill, which gradually slopes down to the vale of some rivulet: a view of great extent and magnificence is presented to the eye; rocks, woods, distant hills, and a sloping lawn of many miles. The whole forming prospects the most romantic and picturesque. Near col. Hammond's farm, there is a natural curiosity worth noticing. A hill, commanding a most extensive prospect, embracing a scope of fifteen or twenty miles, and in some directions more, is completely surrounded by a precipice of the sort described. It is called Rock Fort, and might answer the purpose of fortification; it is nearly two hundred feet higher than the surrounding hills, and on the top there is a level space of ten acres, overgrown with trees; the soil is good. The Platin, which winds at the base of the hill, and whose meandering course can be traced by the sicamore and other trees peculiar to river bottoms, render the prospect still more agreeable. The fort is accessible only by two narrow passes up the precipice or wall, and a fine fountain issues out of the rock.

North of the Maramek there are fewer rugged hills; the land is waving. Towards the river, nearly to St. Louis, the country is not well watered, it is also thinly timbered, and the soil but indifferent. On Grave, and in the Bon Homme settlement, between the Maramek and the Missouri, the land is good, and generally well adapted to cultivation. Between St. Louis and the Missouri, with but trifling excep-

tions, the lands are of a superior quality; there are some beautiful spots, as the village of Florissant, and the environs. No description can do justice to the beauty of this tract. The Missouri bottoms are covered with heavy timber, and by many are preferred to those of the Mississippi or of the Ohio.

The tract of country north of the Missouri, is less hilly than that on the south, but there is a much greater proportion of prairie. It has a waving surface, varied by those dividing ridges of streams, which in Kentucky, are called *knobs*. These prairies, it is well known, are caused by repeated and desolating fires, and the soil is extremely fertile.

The plains of Indiana and Illinois have been mostly produced by the same cause. They are very different from the Savannah's on the sea board, and the immense plains of the Upper Missouri. In the prairies of Indiana, I have been assured that the woods in places have been known to recede, and in others to increase, within the recollection of the old inhabitants. In moist places, the woods are still standing, the fire meeting there with obstruction. Trees, if planted in these prairies, would doubtless grow. In the islands, preserved by accidental causes, the progress of the fire can be traced; the first burning would only scorch the outer bark of the tree; this would render it more susceptible to the next, and the third would completely kill. I have seen in places, at present completely prairie, pieces of burnt trees, proving that the prairie had been caused by fire. The grass is usually very luxuriant, which is not the case in the plains of the Missouri. There may doubtless be spots where the proportion of salts, or other bodies, may be such, as to favor the growth of grass only.

Such woods as remain are fine, but the quantity of adjoining prairie is usually too great. There are large tracts, however, admirably suited for settlements: a thousand acres or more of wood land, surrounded by as much of prairie. It is generally well watered with fine streams, and also interspersed with lakes. There is an extensive strip of land along this side of the Missouri, of nearly thirty miles in width, and about one hundred and fifty in length, altogether woods, and of excellent soil. An old gentleman who has seen Kentucky a wilderness, informed me, that the appearance of this tract is similar, with the exception of its not being covered with cane, and a forest so dark and heavy. The "Forks of the Missouri," (such is the name given to the northern angle, formed by the two great rivers.) daily increases in reputation, and is settling faster than any part of the territory.

The Missouri bottoms, alternately appearing on one side or other of the river, we have already seen, are very fine for three hundred miles up, generally covered with heavy timber; the greatest part of which is cotton wood, of enormous size. The bottoms are usually about two miles in width, and entirely free from inundation. The bottoms of the Mississippi are equally extensive and rich, but not so well wooded. They are in fact a continued succession of the most beautiful prairies or meadows. The tract called *Les Mamelles*, from the circumstance of several mounds, bearing the appearance of art, projecting from the bluff some distance into the plain, may be worth describing as a specimen. It is about three miles from St. Charles; I visited it last summer. To those who have never seen any of these prairies, it is very difficult to convey any just

idea of them. Perhaps the comparison to the smooth green sea, is the best. Ascending the mounds, I was elevated about one hundred feet above the plain; I had a view of an immense plain below, and a distant prospect of hills. Every sense was delighted, and every faculty awakened. After gazing for an hour, I still continued to experience an unsatiated delight, in contemplating the rich and magnificent scene. To the right, the Missouri is concealed by a wood of no great width, extending to the Mississippi, the distance of ten miles. Before me I could mark the course of the latter river, its banks without even a fringe of wood; on the other side, the hills of the Illinois, faced with limestone, in bold masses of various hues, and the summits crowned with trees: pursuing these hills to the north, we see, at the distance of twenty miles, where the Illinois separates them, in his course to the Mississippi. To the left, we behold the ocean of prairie, with islets at intervals. The whole extent perfectly level, covered with long waving grass, and at every moment changing color, from the shadows cast by the passing clouds. In some places there stands a solitary tree of cotton wood or walnut, of enormous size, but from the distance, diminished to a shrub. A hundred thousand acres of the finest land are under the eye at once, and yet on all this space, there is but one little cultivated spot to be seen! The eyes, at last, satiated with the survey of this beautiful scene, the mind in turn expatiates on the improvements of which it is susceptible, and creative fancy adorns it with happy dwellings and richly cultivated fields. The situation in the vicinity of these great rivers, the fertility of the soil, a garden spot, must one day yield nourishment to a multitude of beings. The

bluffs are abundantly supplied with the purest water; those rivulets, and rills, which at present, unable to reach the father of waters, lose themselves in lakes and marshes, will be guided by the hand of man into channels fitted for their reception, and for his pleasure and felicity.

CHAP. IV.

Political divisions—Inhabitants—Settlements—Population.

Shortly after the taking possession of this territory, it was divided by proclamation of governor Harrison, into six districts:

1. St. Charles,
2. St. Louis,
3. St. Genevieve,
4. Cape Girardeau,
5. New Madrid,
6. Arkansas.

The territorial legislature has again subdivided these districts into townships. The term "district" corresponds with the county of the states.

The inhabitants are composed of whites, Indians, metiffs, a few civilized Indians, and negro slaves.

The whites, consist of the ancient inhabitants, and of those who have settled since the change of government. The former are chiefly of French origin; there were scarcely more than three or four Spanish families in this province, and the citizens of the United States, although advantageous offers were held out to them, rarely settled on this side of the river. The French inhabitants resided in villages, and cultivated common fields adjacent to them, in the manner of many parts of Europe: it was here, also, rendered in some degree necessary from their situation. There were always good reasons to apprehend the attacks of Indians; of which, on some

occasions, they had a fatal experience. The small number ef Americans settled here, is also owing to the tide of emigration having set in for the western states. Kentucky, Ohio and Tennessee, were yet unpeopled. Besides, until it was transferred to the United States, there was no security against the depredations of Indians.

For these three last years, the settlements have been increasing rapidly. The American mode of living on detached farms, has been adopted by a number of the French inhabitants of villages, and the settlements extend in larger or smaller groups.

The frontier, at least below the Missouri, may be said to have retired sixty miles west of the Mississippi, and the settlements on the rivers are perfectly safe from the attacks of a savage enemy, should any be apprehended. Within the last two years, farms have been opened from the Missouri to the Arkansas, on the Mississippi; and on this river, above the Missouri, they extend, at distant intervals, to the Prairie du Chien. On the Missouri, they extend upwards of two hundred miles from the mouth of the river. Near Fort Clark, there are a few farms which have lately been opened.

Next to the banks of the navigable rivers, the public roads form the greatest inducement for making settlements. There are consequently establishments on nearly all the roads which traverse the territory; seldom at a greater distance than five or six miles from each other.

An enumeration of the principal settlements will not be uninteresting—I shall therefore begin with those of the district of St. Louis. That of Bon Homme is amongst the most noted; it is on a creek of that name, about fifteen miles from St. Louis: at

this place the Maramek and Missouri come within eight miles of each other. The land is said to be good, and there are in this settlement some very respectable farmers. La riviere des Peres, and a branch of it called Grave, are also tolerably well inhabited; from its vicinity to Bon Homme, it may be considered a part of the same settlement. La rivere des Peres, is a handsome stream which enters the Mississippi between St. Louis and the Maramek. On the Missouri, from the junction to the mouth of Bon Homme, there is a continued and excellent settlement. Immediately on the Maramek the land is broken, but well adapted to the culture of grain: the river bottoms, I have already observed, are of small extent, and but few farms have yet been opened. Between the Maramek and the Platen, there are a considerable number of scattered settlers; and in the neighbourhood of the Joachin, numerous and extensive improvements.

In the district of St. Genevieve, the principal compact settlements are on Big river, which passes through the tract of lead mines: the largest, that of Bellevue, is about fifty miles west of the town of St. Genevieve. There is also a settlement on the St. Francis, within this district, perhaps not inferior to any. In the neighbourhood of the mines, there are usually a number of farms. On la riviere Habitation, the a'Vase, on the Saline, and on Apple creek, there are a number of small settlements, and all over the district there are scattered farms. Bois brule bottom has also a number of good plantations.

Cape Girardeau, contains some of the best settlements in the territory. Burd's is the principal; it is a few miles from the Mississippi, on excellent land; the improvements extensive. There is also a large

settlement of Germans, about thirty miles west of the town. They live well, and are becoming easy in their circumstances: there are also a number of good farms in Tywapety bottom. In general the settlements are much scattered in this district.

In the district of St. Charles, the settlements are also considerable. They extend up the Missouri, nearly two hundred miles. Though between the more considerable groups, the plantations are thinly scattered. Charrette, is the next village after St. Charles, about fifty miles above; it is composed of ten or twelve French families, who live close together, after the ancient custom. There are about forty families on Salt river, above this, who live in the American mode. At the Otter island, there is a settlement, large enough to afford a company of militia. Below the Osage river, but within sight, on the opposite side of the Missouri, there is a French village of about twenty families; it is called Cote sans Dessein. But far the best settlement on the Missouri, is that near the Mine river, on the north east side of the river, and extending about six miles along the bank. There are here about eighty families; some engaged in working salines on the river before mentioned. Several of them have slaves. They will be completely able to defend themselves against any Indians that may be dreaded in this quarter. There are some good settlements on the riviere de Cuivre, near the mouth; but they are much scattered in the forks of the Missouri. A man who was up through that country last summer, for the purpose of looking at the land, told me that he found five families near the heads of the Cuivre; sixty or seventy miles distant from any other settlement: he happened on this group when he had not

the most distant expectation of meeting with any one. In case of war, these poor stragglers will most probably be butchered, unless fortunate enough to escape into the settlements.

The district of New Madrid is but thinly inhabited, considering the great proportion of fine land which it contains. There are some good farms in the neighbourhood of the village. There are also some settlements on the St. Francis, on the banks of the Mississippi, and through the prairies towards Cape Girardeau: particularly on the public road. I travelled over it when it was a wilderness; the contrast even now, is pleasing: some one who passes here at a future day, will find still greater cause of wonder. Little Prairie, thirty miles below New Madrid, on the river, is a considerable settlement.

The settlements of the Arkansas, are principally in the neighbourhood of the Arkansas Post, or extend up the river, and are the least considerable of the territory.

There are besides, a number of small groups through the White river country; but so scattered and remote, that it is difficult to obtain any information respecting them. A number of families in the course of the present year, have removed to Spring river, and others are preparing for it. Several families who arrived at St. Genevieve from the District of Maine, have actually set out for the same place. A village has been commenced at the mouth of Spring river, and consists already of a store, tavern, &c. There seems to prevail a rage amongst the frontiers men, for emigration to that quarter.

The emigrants to this territory, are chiefly from North Carolina and Kentucky; of late, the western part of Pennsylvania contributes considerably to its

population. The excellence and cheapness of the lands, besides the permission of holding slaves, will cause this territory to be preferred by emigrants from the southern states, to any part of the western country, unless it be on the lower parts of the Mississippi, whose unhealthy climate, independent of the high price of lands, will counterbalance many other advantages.

It is perhaps good policy in our government, circumstances considered, to thicken the frontier, and to suffer the intermediate space to fill up gradually. But it is scarcely necessary to hold out inducements for this purpose; it has already taken a start, which it will be almost impossible to arrest. The uncertainty in a great number of the land titles, particularly of the large claimants, presents an obstacle to the torrent of emigration; but I should not be surprised, if in five years, this territory should contain sixty thousand souls.

The manners of the first settlers are not such as writers usually represent them. A principal cause of their removal to the frontier, is the want of wild pasturage, or *range*, as it is called, for their cattle; and those who have been accustomed to the greater ease and freedom of this half shepherd life, naturally desire a continuance. These people, advancing westward, into the vast plains which do not admit of compact settlements, may come still nearer to the pastoral state. The remote settlers, contrary to what would be supposed, from their situation, are not only shrewd and intelligent, but also far from illiterate. The most trifling settlement, will contrive to have a school master, who can teach reading, writing, and some arithmetic. Very different from the good natured, but unenterprising creole,

who does not know a letter of the alphabet. A lady, who had resided with her husband two years at fort Osage, three hundred miles up the Missouri, told me, that descending the river, on her return from that place, she observed on the very spot, where, on ascending, she had seen a herd of deer, several children with books in their hands, returning from school! The settlement had been formed while she was at the fort.

The frontier is certainly the refuge of many worthless and abandoned characters, but it is also the choice of many of the noblest souls. It seems wisely ordered, that in the part which is weakest, where the force of laws is scarcely felt, there should be found the greatest sum of real courage, and of disinterested virtue. Few young men who have migrated to the frontier, are without merit. From the firm conviction, of its future importance, generous and enterprising youth, the virtuous, unfortunate, and those of moderate patrimony, repair to it, that they may grow up with the country, and form establishments for themselves and families. Hence in this territory, there are many sterling characters. Amongst others, I mention with pleasure, that brave and adventurous North Carolinian, who makes so distinguished a figure in the history of Kentucky, the venerable col. Boon. This respectable old man, in the eighty-fifth year of his age, resides on Salt river, up the Missouri, at the settmelent I have before mentioned. He is surrounded by about forty families, who respect him as a father, and who live under a kind of patriarchal government, ruled by his advice and example. They are not necessitous persons, who have fled for their crimes or misfortunes, like those that gathered unto David, in the cave of

Adullam; they all live well, and possess the necessaries and comforts of life, as they could wish. They retired through choice. Perhaps they acted wisely in placing themselves at a distance from the deceit and turbulence of the world. They enjoy an uninterrupted quiet, and a real comfort in their little society, beyond the sphere of that larger society, where government is necessary; where, without walls of adamant, and bands of iron, the *Anarch Fiend*, or the *Monster Despotism*, would trample their security, their happiness, and their dearest possessions under foot. Here they are truly free; exempt from the vexing duties and impositions, even of the best governments; they are neither assailed by the madness of ambition, nor tortured by the poison of party spirit. Is not this one of the most powerful incentives, which impels the *wandering Anglo-American*, to bury himself in the midst of the wilderness?

The following is an abstract of the population of the territory, according to the last census:

St. Charles - - - - -	3,505
St. Louis - - - - -	5,667
St. Genevieve - - - -	4,620
Cape Girardeau - - -	3,888
New Madrid - - - - -	3,103
Hope Field } St. Francis } - - - - -	183
Arkansas - - - - -	874
	21,840
Allow for the troops at the military posts in this territory - - - - -	200
Hunting and trading parties up the Missouri and Mississippi - - -	300

Families settled in remote places,
and not found by the sheriff - - 800

23,140

Of these, 8,011 are slaves; the number of civilized Indians and of metiffs, not known, but cannot be considerable.

CHAPTER V.

Towns and Villages.

Amongst the Americans, every assemblage of houses, no matter of how small a number, is denominated a *town;* in this country every place except New Orleans, however considerable, or extensive, is called a village. In the states, those who follow the plough, are scattered over the country; while the mechanics, and retailers of merchandise, gather in a cluster. Hence the difference in the appearance of the towns or villages of this country. Although there is something like regularity of streets, and the houses are built in front of them, they do not adjoin, while the gardens, orchards, and stables, occupy a considerable space of ground. Each house with its appurtenances, has the appearance of one of our farm yards. All kinds of cattle, cows, hogs, sheep, mingle with the passengers, in the streets. These tenements are generally enclosed with cedar pickets, placed in the manner of stockades, and sometimes with stone walls. The houses are built in a very singular form, and it is said, copied after the fashion of the West Indies. They do not exceed one story in height, and those of the more wealthy are surrounded with spacious galleries; some only on one or two sides, while the poorer class are obliged to put up with naked walls.

These galleries are extremely useful; they render the house cool and agreeable in summer, and afford a pleasant promenade in the heat of the day.

In building their houses, the logs, instead of being laid horizontally, as ours, are placed in a perpendicular position, the interstices closed with earth or stone, as with us. This constitutes a more durable dwelling, and it retains its shape much longer. The roof is extremely broad, extending out with a gradual slope, for the purpose of affording a covering to the gallery. Within these two years, some alterations are perceptible in the general appearance of the villages, from the introduction of a new mode of building by the Americans, of frame, stone, or brick, and in the use of what was before unknown, signs and boards, to indicate the residence of persons following different trades or occupations: although a trifling circumstance, it is a characteristic.

In none of the villages or towns is there a market house; the reason I have already mentioned, the inhabitants raised their own provisions, and were all cultivators of the soil.

St. Louis—Is the seat of government of the territory, and has always been considered the principal town. It was formerly called Pain Court, from the privations of the first settlers.* It is situated in latitude 38 degrees 23 minutes north, long. 89 degrees 36 minutes west.

This place occupies one of the best situations on the Mississippi, both as to site and geographical position. In this last respect, the confluence of the

* Judging from many of the names of villages, one might suppose that they had not been settled under the most happy auspices; there are *Misere*, *Creve-coeur* and *Vuide poche!*

Ohio and the Mississippi, has certainly much greater natural advantages, but the ground is subject to inundation, and St. Louis has taken a start, which it will most probably retain. It is perhaps not saying too much, that it bids fair to be second to New Orleans in importance, on this river.

The ground on which St. Louis stands is not much higher than the ordinary banks, but the floods are repelled by a bold shore of limestone rocks. The town is built between the river and a second bank, three streets running parallel with the river, and a number of others crossing these at right angles. It is to be lamented that no space has been left between the town and the river; for the sake of the pleasure of the promenade, as well as for business and health, there should have been no encroachment on the margin of the noble stream. The principal place of business ought to have been on the bank. From the opposite side, nothing is visible of the busy bustle of a populous town; it appears closed up. The site of St. Louis is not unlike that of Cincinnati. How different would have been its appearance, if built in the same elegant manner: its bosom opened to the breezes of the river, the streams enlivened by scenes of business and pleasure, and rows of elegant and tasteful dwellings, looking with pride on the broad wave that passes!

From the opposite bank, St. Louis, notwithstanding, appears to great advantage. In a disjoined and scattered manner it extends along the river a mile and an half, and we form the idea of a large and elegant town. Two or three large and costly buildings (though not in the modern taste) contribute in producing this effect. On closer examination, the town seems to be composed of an equal proportion of stone

walls, houses, and fruit trees: but the illusion still continues.

On ascending the second bank, which is about forty feet above the level of the plain, we have the town below us, and a view of the Mississippi in each direction, and of the fine country through which it passes. When the curtain of wood which conceals the American bottom shall have been withdrawn, or a vista formed by opening farms to the river, there will be a delightful prospect into that rich and elegant tract. The bottom at this place is not less than eight miles wide, and finely diversified with prairie and woodland.

There is a line of works on this second bank, erected for defence against the Indians, consisting of several circular towers, twenty feet in diameter, and fifteen in height, a small stockaded fort, and a stone breast work. These are at present entirely unoccupied and waste, excepting the fort, in one of the buildings of which, the courts are held, while the other is used as a prison. Some distance from the termination of this line, up the river, there are a number of Indian mounds, and remains of antiquity; which, while they are ornamental to the town, prove, that in former times, those places had also been chosen as the site, perhaps, of a populous city.

Looking to the west, a most charming country spreads itself before us. It is neither very level nor hilly, but of an agreeable waving surface, and rising for several miles with an ascent almost imperceptible. Except a small belt to the north, there are no trees; the rest is covered with shrubby oak, intermixed with hazels, and a few trifling thickets, of thorn, crab apple, or plumb trees. At the first glance we are reminded of the environs of a great

city; but there are no country seats, or even plain farm houses: it is a vast waste, yet by no means a barren soil. Such is the appearance, until turning to the left, the eye again catches the Mississippi. A number of fine springs take their rise here, and contribute to the uneven appearance. The greater part fall to the S. W. and aid in forming a beautiful rivulet, which a short distance below the town gives itself to the river. I have been often delighted in my solitary walks, to trace the rivulet to its sources. Three miles from town, but within view, amongst a few tall oaks, it rises in four or five silver fountains, within short distances of each other: presenting a picture to the fancy of the poet, or the pencil of the painter. I have fancied myself for a moment on classic ground, and beheld the Naiads pouring the stream from their urns.

Close to the town, there is a fine mill erected by Mr. Choteau on this streamlet; the dam forms a beautiful sheet of water, and affords much amusement in fishing and fowling, to the people of the town.

The common field of St. Louis was formerly enclosed on this bank, consisting of several thousand acres; at present there are not more than two hundred under cultivation; the rest of the ground looks like the worn common, in the neighbourhood of a large town; the grass kept down and short, and the loose soil in several places cut open into gaping ravines.

St. Louis was first established in the spring of 1764. It was principally settled by the inhabitants who abandoned the village of Fort Chartres, on the east side of the Mississippi. The colony flourished, and became the parent of a number of little villages

on the Mississippi and Missouri; Carondelet, St. Charles' Portage des Sioux, St. Johns, Bon Homme, St. Ferdinand, &c.

From the abominable practice, of urging the northern Indians against the settlers, this place suffered an attack which still excites bitter recollections. In 1779, a combination of the Indian tribes, prompted by the English, attempted a general invasion of the French villages on both sides of the river, and accordingly descended in considerable force, but were checked by Gen. Clark, who commanded the American troops on the other side. An attack was, however, made upon a small settlement, commenced within a few miles of the town, and the inhabitants were nearly all butchered: others, who happened to be out of St. Louis, were killed or pursued within a short distance of the town. It is said that upwards of eighty persons fell victims to their fury. Happily, this will be the last time that St. Louis will ever have any thing to dread from the Indians; the frontier has extended so far north and west, that a complete barrier is formed against future incursions. They may come here in peace, and for the purpose of trade, but it will be far hence that they will dare to raise the tomahawk.

St. Louis contains according to the last census one thousand four hundred inhabitants. One fifth Americans, and about four hundred people of color. There are a few Indians and metiffs, in the capacity of servants, or wives to boatmen. This town was at no time so agricultural as the other villages; being a place of some trade, the chief town of the province, and the residence of a number of mechanics. It remained nearly stationary for two or three years after the cession; but is now beginning

to take a start, and its reputation is growing abroad. Every house is crowded, rents are high, and it is exceedingly difficult to procure a tenement on any terms. Six or seven houses were built in the course of last season, and probably twice the number will be built the next. There is a printing office, and twelve mercantile stores. The value of imports to this place in the course of the year, may be estimated at two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The outfits for the different trading establishments, on the Mississippi or Missouri, are made here.—The lead of the Sac mines is brought to this place; the troops at Belle Fontaine put sixty thousand dollars in circulation annually. The settlers in the vicinity on both sides of the river, repair to this place as the best market for their produce, and to supply themselves with such articles as they may need.

The price of marketing does not differ much from the towns of the western country; every thing appears to be approximating to the same standard. Game of all kinds is brought in by the neighbouring Indians, or the poorer inhabitants, and sold for a mere trifle; such as venison, turkeys, geese, ducks, swans, prairie hens, &c. Upon the whole, provisions are no higher than in the towns of the Ohio.

The manners of the inhabitants are not different from those in other villages; we distinctly see the character of the ancient inhabitants, and of the new residents, and a compound of both. St. Louis, however, was always a place of more refinement and fashion, it is the residence of many genteel families, both French and American.

A few American mechanics, who have settled here, within a short time, are great acquisitions to the

place; and there is still ample room for workmen of all kinds. There is a French school and an English one.

St. Louis, will probably become one of those great reservoirs of the valley between the Rocky mountains and the Allegheny, from whence merchandise will be distributed to an extensive country. It unites the advantages of the three noble rivers, Mississippi, Illinois and Missouri. When their banks shall become the residence of millions, when flourishing towns shall arise, can we suppose that every vender of merchandise, will look to New Orleans for a supply, or to the Atlantic cities? There must be a place of distribution, somewhere between the mouth of the Ohio and Missouri. Besides a trade to the northern parts of New Spain will be opened, and a direct communication to the East Indies, by way of the Missouri, may be more than dreamt: in this case, St. Louis will become the *Memphis* of the American Nile.

St. Genevieve—Is next in consequence to St. Louis. It is at present the principal deposit of the lead, of Mine la Motte, the Mine a'Burton, New Diggings, the mines on Big river, with several others; and is the store, back from whence those engaged in working the mines are supplied with a variety of articles. This town was begun about the year 1774.

It is situated about one mile from the Mississippi, between the two branches of a stream called Gabourie, on a flat of about one hundred acres, and something higher than the river bottom. There is a second bank about twenty feet higher than this, upon which the town begins at present to extend; this is nothing more than a bank, however, and bounded by a third bank, eighty feet above the level of the

river: there are also scattered houses for some distance up each branch of the Gabourie. West of the town, and also north of the Gabourie, the country is high and somewhat broken. The soil is a yellow clay; in places strewed with horn stone, but produces good wheat. The timber, has been nearly all destroyed for the use of the inhabitants. In front of the town, on the Mississippi, there is a fine bottom, commencing from the Gabourie, and extending eight or nine miles down the river; and for the greater part of that distance, three miles in width. The common field under fence, contains seven thousand acres. There are six stores, and in the course of the present year, the imports might amount to one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. St. Genevieve is a rising town; a greater number of buildings have been erected here than at St. Louis, and preparations are making for building a number more in the course of the next season. There are two brick yards. A very handsome edifice has been erected of limestone, on the hill, commanding an elegant prospect of the river, the American bottom, and of the hills on the other side of the Kaskaskia. This building is intended as an academy, but unfortunately, the gentlemen who undertook this work, have not been able fully to succeed, from the want of proper support.

The population of St. Genevieve including New Bourbon, amounts to one thousand four hundred. There is about the same population of slaves, as at St. Louis; the number of Americans is also about the same. There was formerly a village of Piorias below the town, but they abandoned it some time ago.

This appears also to have been one of those spots pitched upon by former and numerous nations of Indians as a place of residence. In the bottom there are a number of large mounds. Barrows, and places of interment, are every where to be seen.

The mouth of the Gabourie is about one mile and an half above the town; it is the landing place and harbor of boats, and when the water is high, they can come up to the town, of every size.

In the neighbourhood, there are several remarkable fountains, which send forth copious streams of water. One about a mile distant, affords a considerable accession to the Gabourie, and turns a mill a short distance below. The fountain itself, is truly beautiful; after wandering for some time over arid and dry hills, we come all at once into a thick grove of oak, hickory and other trees, and descending a declivity, we discover the fountain, fifteen or twenty feet square, and as many in depth, enclosed on all sides, except the one from whence the stream issues, by masses of living rock, and its glassy surface, shaded with young trees and shrubs. Various beautiful creeping vines, with their flowers, soften the severity of the frowning rock, and sport in festoons woven by the hand of nature. I recollect a trifling incident, which occurred in one of my visits to this fountain, but which made an impression on my mind. I found a party of about sixty Shawanese warriors encamped near it; after some conversation with the chief, a good old man, and of a remarkably fine figure; "why" said he, "does not some white man build a house and settle himself near this place?" but, continued the old chief, seemingly recollecting himself, "perhaps some Monitou (spirit) resides here, and will not permit it!" How similar is the

action of the human mind in all countries, and in all ages. It seems to be a natural sentiment to attribute to whatever is extraordinary, the agency or control of some superior being. The ancient Greeks and Romans, in their highest stage of refinement, carried it so far, as to have divinities for every fountain and river.

St. Genevieve was formerly built immediately on the Mississippi, but the washing away of the bank, and the great flood of 1782 *(l'anne' des eaux)* caused the inhabitants to choose a higher situation. The ruins of the old town may be still seen, and there are several orchards of fine fruit yet remaining.

The principal employment of the inhabitants is agriculture; but the greater part, are also more or less engaged in the lead mines. This is a career of industry open to all, and the young, in setting out to do something for themselves, usually make their first essay in this business. A number of the inhabitants are also employed as boatmen, for the purpose of conducting voyages. There is some Indian trade, from the neighboring Shawanese, Pioras, and Delawares. There are but few mechanics, and these but indifferent. A chapel is erected here, at which the Rev. Mr. Maxwell officiates.

As the agriculture of St. Genevieve, is carried on more extensively than in any of the other villages, I shall take this opportunity of giving a description of it. One fence encloses the whole village field, and this is kept up at the common expense. The river side is left open, the steepness of the bank rendering any enclosure unnecessary. This field is divided into a number of small lots, of an equal size; a certain number of arpents in front, and a certain number in depth. The more wealthy possess and culti-

vate several of these lots, while some of the poorer class do not own one entire. But nearly all the inhabitants have a share in them; they were ceded by the Spanish government, as an appendage to the possession of every resident in the village. This mode has been practised from the earliest settlements on both sides of the Mississippi, and perhaps had its origin from necessary precaution against the Indians. Their agricultural labors commence in the month of April, when the inhabitants, with their slaves, are seen going and returning, each morning and evening, for eight or ten days, with their ploughs, carts, horses, &c. The ground is broken up with a kind of wheel plough, which enters deep into the soil. Corn, pumpkins, and spring wheat, compose the usual crop. It is now left entirely to nature, and no further attention is paid to it until harvest, when each villager, but without that mirth and jollity, which usually takes place on such occasions, in other countries, quietly hauls in his own crop. There is a great contrast between the lots cultivated by the Americans, and those of the creoles; pains are taken to keep them clear of weeds, and this is rewarded by a crop of at least one third greater. In the rich alluvia, it is thought, that wheat sowed in the spring is best; it does not grow so rank, and is less apt to lodge or mildew. There is a kind of weed here resembling hemp, having a coarse, vigorous stalk, and a strong but not disagreeable smell; this, the inhabitants cut during summer, to feed their horses. It grows in the rich bottoms, and in great abundance through the common fields; cattle are extremely fond of it. After the harvest is completed, the barriers of the fields are opened, and all the cattle of the village permitted to be turned in.

Horses put into the field before this period, (for each one has generally a part of his lot in grass) are tied to long ropes, which are fastened to stakes.

Besides the lots, in the great field, the principal inhabitants, have of late years, opened plantations, within some miles of the town; and the greater part of the stock formerly seen about this place, has been removed to the country farms: in consequence of which, the passengers are enabled to go through the streets without danger of being jostled by horses, cows, hogs and oxen, which formerly crowded them.

St. Charles—As well as the two places before described, is the seat of justice of the district bearing its name. It contains three hundred inhabitants, a considerable proportion of them Americans. There are two or three stores, which, besides supplying the country people of the neighbourhood, have some trade with Indian or white hunters, in furs and peltries. But this is in a great measure, the residence of that class of French inhabitants, whose occupation is that of *engagees*, or boatmen. Several genteel families also reside here.

The village is situated on the north side of the Missouri, twenty miles from the junction. It is built on a very narrow space, between the river and the bluff, admitting but one street a mile in length. A short distance below, the bottom becomes wide; the hills behind the village are extremely rough, and scarcely susceptible of tillage. The Missouri is yearly washing away the ground on which this place stands. The common field is situated two miles lower down.

New Madrid—The seat of justice of the district, and formerly called, *l'Anse a'la gresse*. It is situated in 36 degrees 34 minutes north, longitude 89 de-

grees 20 minutes west. Though in a low state of improvement at present, it ought to become important. It will be the store house of the produce of an extensive and fertile country; and from the St. Francis and the lakes which lie south west, it may derive important advantages. New Madrid was laid out twenty-four years ago, by col. George Morgan, on an extensive scale, and an elegant plan. It was chosen as one of the best situations on the river. The town contains four hundred inhabitants, one third Americans, living in a scattered way, over a great space of ground. It is the residence of several amiable and genteel families, from whom, I acknowledge with pleasure, to have received much kindness and hospitality. There is, however, a due proportion of the worthless and despicable part of society.

At New Madrid, the Mississippi has the shape of a half moon, in the hollow of which, the town stands. The bank is high, but the washing away has been astonishingly great, at least three hundred yards have disappeared. Three forts, and a number of large and spacious streets have been carried away, within these fifteen years. From the course which the river has now assumed, it is probable that this will cease, and such is the character of this wonderful stream, that in a few years, New Madrid may be left far from its bank.

At the upper end of the town there is a considerable stream, of which I have already spoken, and might, at most seasons, be navigated to its source; at New Madrid it is called the Bayou St. John, and affords an excellent harbour. Below the town there is a beautiful lake, six or eight feet deep, with a clear sandy bottom, and communicating with the St.

Francis, and the Mississippi, in high water. On the bank of this lake, about four miles from New Madrid, there is one of the largest Indian mounds in the western country: as near as I could compute, it is twelve hundred feet in circumference, and about forty in height, level on the top, and surrounded with a ditch five feet deep and ten wide. In this neighborhood there are traces of a great population.

The country in the vicinity of New Madrid, is a vast plain of the richest soil, handsomely diversified with prairie and wood land. There is not much business done at this place; two or three mercantile stores are established, but not extensively; yet I should think this, a situation extremely eligible for a person of enterprise.

New Madrid is considered healthy, and from my own experience, I am convinced of the justice of this character. There is nothing more delightful than a promenade in a summer evening, on the smooth green along the bank. The climate is mild and agreeable; in the hottest days of summer, a cool and refreshing breeze is felt from the river. The spring is comparatively early. I gathered strawberries here the twentieth of April, and at St. Louis in June. New Madrid deserves to be noted for having a number of remarkably fine gardens, the inhabitants paying great attention to this culture.

Arkansas.—This place is situated sixty miles up the river, and contains four hundred and fifty inhabitants; it has a few stores, and seems to be improving. There is a considerable trade with the Osages up the Arkansas, and with the Indians, who live in the White river country. This is also a French establishment, and with about the same proportion of Americans as in the other towns.

Cape Girardeau—The seat of justice for the district of that name, and situated thirty-five miles above the mouth of the Ohio. This town is entirely American, and built in their fashion. It is thriving fast: there are a number of good houses, several of them of brick. It contains about thirty dwellings, and three hundred inhabitants.

The town is situated on a high bluff, but the descent to the river is not difficult. From its situation, and the excellence of the surrounding country, this town bids fair to become a flourishing place. Two stores are established here, though on a small scale. I have the pleasure of being acquainted with several amiable families.

Herculaneum—On the Mississippi, half way between St. Louis and St. Genevieve.

The situation of this place is extremely romantic; at the mouth of the Joachin, and on a flat of no great width, between the river hill and second bank, while at each end, perpendicular precipices, two hundred feet high, rise almost from the water's edge. It appears to be an opening for the admission of the Joachin to the Mississippi. On the top of each of these cliffs, shot towers have been established. The town contains twenty houses, and two hundred inhabitants; here is a store, an excellent blacksmith, and a hatter. The country behind the town is hilly, but well timbered, and good land. Several fine mills have been erected in the neighbourhood of this place, and boat building is carried on.

Carondelet, or Vuidepoche, is situated six miles below St. Louis—two hundred and eighteen inhabitants. Florissant, on the Missouri, two hundred and seventy. Mine La Mote, two hundred and

fifty, and a number of other small villages. A village has lately been commenced at the mouth of the St. Francis.

CHAP. VI.

Character of the ancient inhabitants—change of government.

THERE is scarcely any thing more difficult, and consequently more rare, than correct delineation of character:—This task is usually undertaken by friends or enemies, and the result is either panegyrick or satire.—Even amongst such as are unbiassed, how few the happy copyists, who can paint nature with her own colours, so as to be recognized by every beholder!

Conscious of this difficulty, I entertain humble hopes of success in being able to satisfy the expectation and inquiries of the intelligent reader. And, particularly where there are no striking and prominent features, but the traits of an infant colony delicately marked.

A colony will not remain long separated from the parent stock, until it exhibits a peculiar and distinct character. Climate, situation, and country, although not exclusively the agents in forming this character, must nevertheless, be admitted to have great influence. Nor do the manners of the parent country continue invariable; other times, other men, other circumstances, produce the most surprising changes, while the colony, beyond the sphere of their influence, retains its pristine customs and manners. The

Spaniards of Mexico, are said to bear a stronger resemblance to their ancestors of the fifteenth century, than to their present brethren of Old Spain:—The French inhabitants of the Mississippi, have little resemblance to the gay, and perhaps frivolous, Frenchmen of Louis the fifteenth and sixteenth, and still less to those who have felt the racking storm of the revolution.

The present inhabitants are chiefly descendents of the settlers who were induced to remove hither from Canada. In consequence of the misfortunes of France, the settlements of the Illinois experienced a sudden and rapid decay; which was again accelerated by the conquest of General Clark for the United States, in 1779. The greater number of the wealthy and respectable inhabitants descended the Mississippi, and settled in New Orleans, and the lower country. Others crossed the Mississippi, and established St. Louis and St. Genevieve Scarcely any but natives of the country remained. The foreigners chiefly returned to the countries from whence they first emigrated.

Such is the origin of the greater part of that class of the population of this territory, which I have denominated the ancient inhabitants. They are chiefly natives of the country; but few families are immediately from France, or even from New Orleans or Canada.

In the character of these people, it must be remembered, that they are essentially Frenchmen; but, without that restlessness, impatience and fire, which distinguishes the European. There is, even in their deportment, something of the gravity of the Spaniard, though gay, and fond of amusements. From the gentle and easy life which they led, their manners,

and even language, have assumed a certain degree of softness and mildness: the word *paisible*, expresses this characteristic. In this remote country, there were few objects to urge to enterprise, and few occasions to call forth and exercise their energies. The necessaries of life were easily procured, and beggary was unknown. Hospitality was exercised as in the first ages. Ambition soared far hence, for here there was no prey. Judges, codes of law, and prisons, were of little use, where such simplicity of manners prevailed, and where every one knew how far to confide in his neighbour. In such a state of things, to what end is learning or science? The schools afforded but slender instruction; the better sort of people acquired in them reading, writing, and little arithmetic. The number of those who were lovers of knowledge, and make it a profession, was small. From the habits of these people, it would naturally be expected, that they would have been unaccustomed to reason on political subjects; they were in fact, as ignorant of them, as children are of life and manners. These inhabitants were as remarkable for their tame and peaceable disposition, as the natives of France are for the reverse.

Amongst their virtues, we may enumerate honesty and punctuality in their dealings, hospitality to strangers, friendship and affection amongst relatives and neighbours. Instances of abandonment on the female side, or of seduction, are extremely rare. The women make faithful and affectionate wives, but will not be considered secondary in the matrimonial association. The advice of the wife is taken on all important, as well as on less weighty concerns, and she generally decides. In opposition to these

virtues, it must be said, that they are devoid of public spirit, of enterprise, display but little ingenuity or taste, and are indolent and uninformed.

They are catholics, but, very far from being bigoted or superstitious. They were perhaps more strict observers, formerly, of the rules and discipline of their church, and of the different holy days in the calendar. Their *fetes*, or celebration of these days, were considered, as the most interesting occasions; the old and young engaged in them with the greatest delight, and certainly contributed to their happiness. Of late, this attention to the ceremonies of their religion is considerably relaxed, since other objects of pursuit and interest have been opened to their view. The catholic worship is the only one yet known in the territory, except in private families, and in a few instances of itinerant preachers.

There was scarcely any distinction of classes in the society. The wealthy and more intelligent, would of course be considered as more important personages, but there was no difference clearly marked. They all associated, dressed alike, and frequented the small ball room. They were in fact nearly all connected by the ties of affinity or consanguinity: so extensive is this that I have seen the carnival, from the death of a common relation, pass by cheerless and unheeded. The number of persons excluded was exceedingly small. What an inducement to comport ones self with propriety and circumspection! The same interest at stake, the same sentiments that in other countries influence the first classes of society, were here felt by all its members. Perhaps as many from unmerited praise have been formed into valuable characters, as others from

having been unjustly despised have become truly despicable.

Their wealth consisted principally in personal property, lands were only valuable when improved. Slaves were regarded in the light of *bien foncier*, or real property, and in fact, as the highest species. Lead and peltry were frequently used as the circulating medium.

There was but little variety in their employments. The most enterprising and wealthy were traders, and had at the same time trifling assortments of merchandise for the accommodation of the inhabitants, but there were no open shops or stores, as in the United States. There were no tailors or shoemakers; such as pursue these occupations at present, are from the United States. The few mechanics, exercising their trades, principally carpenters and smiths, scarcely deserved the name. The lead mines, I have already observed, engaged a considerable number. The government gave employment to but few, and those principally at St. Louis. By far the greater proportion of the population was engaged in agriculture; in fact, it was the business of all, since the surplus of produce of the country was too inconsiderable to be depended upon. A number of the young men for some time, embraced the employment of boatmen, which was by no means considered degrading; on the contrary, it was desirable for a young man to have it to say, that he had made a voyage in this capacity: and they appeared proud of the occupation, in which they certainly are not surpassed by any people in dexterity. It is highly pleasing to see them exerting themselves, and giving encouragement to each other, by their cheering songs—

—— adductis spumant freta versa lacertis.
Infindunt pariter sulcos; totumque dehiscet
Convulsum remis, rostrisque tridentibus æquor.

But this occupation, amongst many other changes, has been reduced to the same footing as with the Americans. Arising probably from the simple cause, of there having arisen objects of more generous emulation.

What is somewhat strange, there were no domestic manufactures among them; the spinning wheel and the loom were alike unknown. So deficient were they in this respect, that although possessed of numerous herds, they were not even acquainted with the use of the churn, but made their butter by beating the cream in a bowl, or shaking it in a bottle.

Their amusements, were cards, billiards, and dances: this last of course the favourite. The dances, were cotillions, reels, and sometimes the minuet. During the carnival, the balls follow in rapid succession. They have a variety of pleasing customs, connected with this amusement. Children have also their balls, and are taught a decorum and propriety of behaviour, which is preserved through life. They have a certain ease and freedom of address, and are taught the secret of real politeness, *self denial;* but which by the apes of French manners, is mistaken for an affected grimace of complaisant regard, and a profusion of bows, scrapes and professions.

Their language, every thing considered, is more pure than might be expected; their manner of lengthening the sound of words, although languid, and without the animation which the French generally possess, is by no means disagreeable. They have some new words, and others are in use, which in France have become obsolete.

In their persons, they are well formed, of an agreeable pleasant countenance; indicating cheerfulness and serenity. Their dress was formerly extremely simple; the men wore a blanket coat, of coarse cloth or coating, with a cape behind, which could be drawn over the head; from which circumstance it was called a *capote*. Both sexes wore blue handkerchiefs on their heads: but no hats, or shoes, or stockings; mockasins, or the Indian sandals, were also used. The dress of the females was generally simple, and the variations of fashion, few: though they were dressed in a much better taste than the other sex. These manners will soon cease to exist, but in remembrance and description: every thing has changed. The American costume is generally introduced into the best families, and among the young girls and young men universally. I never saw any where greater elegance of dress than at the balls of St. Louis. We still see a few of both sexes in their ancient habiliments; capots, mockasins, blue handkerchiefs on their heads, a pipe in the mouth, and the hair tied up in a long queue. These people exhibit a striking difference when compared with the unconquerable pertinacity of the Pennsylvania Germans, who adhere so rigidly to the customs, manners and language of their fathers. A few years have effected a greater change with the inhabitants of this territory than has been brought about amongst the Germans in fifty years.

The *government* of the province, was a mixture of the civil and military. Each district had its commandant, or syndic, who was the judge in civil matters under a certain amount, and had also command of the militia. They received their appointment from the Intendant at New Orleans, to whom

there was an appeal from their decisions, and where were also referred such matters as exceeded their jurisdiction. Arbitrations under the direction of the commandant, in some degree obviated his want of authority. The mode of proceeding, in the recovery of debts, was very summary and expeditious, the party complaining obtained a notification from the commandant to his adversary of the complaint, accompanied by a command from the commandant, to render the complainant justice. If this had no effect, he was notified to appear before the commandant on a particular day, and answer the complaint; and if this last notice was neglected, a sergeant, with a file of men, was sent to bring him; if he had nothing to urge in his defence, he was instantly condemned to discharge the debt or go to prison.

The lieut. governor, who resided at St. Louis, was the commander of the militia, and had a general superintendance of the public works and property, but I do not know the exact extent of his powers. The laws of Spain were in force here: but it does not appear that any others had been in practice, besides those, which related to lands and the municipal arrangements. Laws regulating civil contrasts, are so intimately interwoven with the manners of a people, that it is no easy task to separate them: here *la coutume de Paris*, the common law of the French colonies, was the system by which their contracts were governed. The judges, in administering justice, according to the American jurisprudence, are often perplexed by the article of session, which provides, that respect should be paid to the usages and customs of the country. A few troops were kept up in each district, throughout the province, but too inconsiderable to afford much protection to the inhabi-

tants. This country being so remote from the main possessions of Spain, was not regarded with much attention, when we consider its natural importance. The rod of government was so light as scarcely to be felt; the worst of the governors, were content, with imposing on their king, by exhorbitant charges for useless fortifications, or for supplies never furnished. I have heard of some oppressions practised on strangers, but I have been informed by a number of Americans settled here before the change, that the Spanish government treated them with particular attention and respect. I believe, instances of individual oppressions on the part of the governors, were few: but this is to be attributed, not to the government, but to the state of society.

The present government appears to be operating a general change: its silent but subtle spirit is felt in every nerve and vein, of the body politic. The United States, acting upon broad principles, cannot be influenced by contemptible partialities between their own sons and their adopted children. They do not want colonies—they will disdain to hold others in the same state, which they themselves so nobly despised. They are in fact, both natives of the same land, and both can claim *Freedom* as their birthright.

It requires many hands to work the complicated machinery of our government; the object of which, is to enable men, as much as possible, to govern themselves. Each of the principal towns has its officers, its legislature, in which the ancient inhabitants have the principal voice. They have been placed on the bench, they are jurors and magistrates; commissions are distributed, which, although not regarded of much importance in time of peace, yet

make a man feel that he counts something in his country; for instance, in the militia, there are generals, colonels, majors, captains, &c. Thus, one might suppose that their manners and habits of thinking were gradually preparing for the reception of a free government. The Americans have communicated to them, their industry and spirit of enterprize, and they in turn, have given some of their more gentle and amiable customs. Upon the whole, the American manners, and even language, begin to predominate. The young men have already been formed by our government, and those growing up will have known no other. A singular change has taken place, which, one would think, ought not to be the result of a transition from a despotism to a republican government: luxury has increased in a wonderful degree, and there exists something like a distinction in the classes of society. On the other hand, more pains are taken with the education of youth; some have sent their sons to the seminaries of the United States, and all seem anxious to attain this desirable end. Several of the young men have entered the army of the United States, and have discovered talents. The females are also instructed with more care, and the sound of the piano is now heard in their dwellings for the first time.

Personal property, a few articles excepted, has fallen on an average, two hundred per cent. in value, and real property risen at least five hundred. But the prices of merchandize had no proportion to the price of produce. Five bushels of corn were formerly necessary for the purchase of a handkerchief, which can now be had for one. The cultivators raised little produce beyond what was necessary for their own subsistence, it was therefore held at high

prices, but fell far short of the present proportion to the price of imported articles; the petty trade was the principal dependence for these supplies. Their agriculture was so limited, that instances have been known, of their having been supplied by the king, on the failure of their crops from the inundation of the Mississippi. The low value of lands naturally arose from the great quantities lying waste, and unoccupied, in proportion to the extent of the population, or of its probable increase, and the consequent facility with which it could be obtained. Rent was scarcely known.

It may be questioned, whether the poorest class has been benefitted by the change. Fearless of absolute want, they always lived in a careless and thoughtless manner: at present the greater part of them obtain a precarious subsistence. They generally possess a cart, a horse or two, a small stock of cattle, and cultivate some spots of ground. At St. Louis they have more employment than in the other villages; they make hay in the prairies, haul wood for sale, and are employed to do trifling jobs in town; some are boatmen or patrons. At St. Genevieve, they depend more upon their agriculture, and have portions in the great field, but this will probably soon be taken from them by the great industry of the American cultivators, who are continually purchasing, and who can give double the sum for rent; they are sometimes employed in hauling lead from the mines, but it will not be sufficient for their support. A number have removed to the country, and, in imitation of the Americans, have settled down on public lands, but here they cannot expect to remain long. Those who live in the more remote villages, are less affected by the change, but there is little prospect of

their being better situated. But few of them have obtained permission from the commandant, to settle on lands; in fact, until very lately there was no safety from the depredations of the Indians, in forming establishments beyond the villages. Land was only valued for what it could produce, and any one could obtain as much as he chose to cultivate.

Until possession was taken of the country by us, there was no safety from the robberies of the Osage Indians. That impolitic lenity, which the Spanish and even the French government have manifested towards them, instead of a firm though just course, gave rise to the most insolent deportment on their part. I have been informed by the people of St. Genevieve, who suffered infinitely the most, that they were on one occasion left without a horse to turn a mill. The Osages were never followed to any great distance or overtaken; this impunity necessarily encouraged them. They generally entered the neighbourhood of the villages, divided into small parties, and during the night, stole in and carried away every thing they could find, frequently breaking open stables, and taking out the horses. After uniting at a small distance, their place of rendezvous, they marched leisurely home, driving the stolen horses before them, and without the least dread of being pursued. They have not dared to act in this manner under the present government; there have been a few solitary instances of robberies by them, within these three or four years, but they are sufficiently acquainted with the Americans to know, that they will be instantly pursued, even into their villages and compelled to surrender. The following well attested fact, will serve to show the insolence of the Osages under the former government. A young couple

on their way from the settlement, just then formed on Big river, to St. Genevieve, accompanied by a number of their friends, with the intention of having the matrimonial knot tied by the priest, were met by sixty Osages, robbed of their horses, and the whole party actually stripped! What serves, however, to lessen the atrocity of these outrages, it has been remarked, that they are never known to take away the lives of those who fall into their hands. The insolence of the other nations who came openly to their villages, the Pioras, Loups, Kickapoos, Chickasas, Cherokees, &c. is inconceivable. They were sometimes perfectly masters of the villages, and excited general consternation. I have seen the houses on some occasions closed up, and the doors barred by the terrified inhabitants; they were not always safe even there. It is strange how these people have entirely disappeared within a few years, there are at present scarcely a sufficient number to supply the villages with game.

On the part of the United States, possession was taken of this territory in 1804, by capt. (now maj.) Stoddard, who was the first civil commandant. In pursuance of the act of Congress, which separated it from the district of Orleans, with the name of the district of Louisiana, it was placed for the moment, under the government of the territory of Indiana. Governor Harrison, of that territory, accordingly, organized the government, and put it in motion. In 1805, it was erected into a territorial government, similar to that of the other territories, by the name of the *Territory of Louisiana.** For these things I

* The territory of Orleans has now become the "state of Louisiana," and the "territory of Louisiana" has been changed to the "territory of the Missouri."

must refer the reader to the different acts of Congress on the subject. Two important treaties were formed with the Indians, one with the Sacs and Foxes, and the other with the Great and Little Osages.

If I am asked, whether the ancient inhabitants are more contented, or happy, under the new order of things, or have reason to be so, I should consider the question a difficult one, and answer it with hesitation. It is not easy to know the secret sentiments of men, and happiness is a relative term. It is true, I have heard murmurings against the present government, and something like sorrowing after that of Spain, which I rather attributed to momentary chagrin, than to real and sincere sentiment: besides, this generally proceeds from those who were wont to bask in the sunshine of favour. Yet I have not observed those signs which unequivocally mark a suffering and unhappy people. The principal source of uneasiness arises from the difficulties of settling the land claims by the commissioners on the part of the United States. The principal inhabitants have lost much of that influence which they formerly possessed, and are superseded in trade and in lucrative occupations by strangers; their land claims, therefore, constitute their chief dependence. The subject of those claims embraces such a variety of topics, that it is not possible to give any correct idea of them in this cursory view. It is a subject on which the claimants are feelingly alive. This anxiety is a tacit compliment to our government, for under the former, their claims would be scarcely worth attention. The general complaint is, the want of sufficient liberality in determining on them. There is perhaps too great a disposition to lean against the larger concessions, some of which are unreasonably

great, but when we consider the trifling value of lands under the Spanish government, there will appear less justice in this prepossession against them. For many reasons, it would not be to the honor of the United States, that too much strictness should be required in the proof, or formalities of title, particularly of a people who came into their power without any participation on their part, and without having been consulted. Six years have passed away without the final adjustment of the claims, and even those that have been decided upon, will give rise to lawsuits; it is probable there will be as copious a harvest of these as ever was furnished by any of the states.

The lower class have never been in the habit of thinking beyond what immediately concern themselves; they cannot therefore, be expected to foresee political consequences. They were formerly under a kind of dependence, or rather vassalage, to the great men of villages, to whom they looked up for their support and protection. Had they been more accustomed to think it possible, that by industry it was in their power to become rich, and independent also, the change would have been instantly felt in their prosperity. But they possess a certain indifference and apathy, which cannot be changed till the present generation shall pass away. They are of late observed to become fond of intoxicating liquors. There is a middle class, whose claims or possessions were not extensive, but sure, and from the increased value of their property, have obtained since the change of government, a handsome competence. They, upon the whole, are well satisfied; I have heard many of them express their approbation of the American government, in the warmest terms.

They feel and speak like freemen, and are not slow in declaring, that formerly the field of enterprize was occupied by the monopolies of a few, and it is now open to every industrious citizen.

There are some things in the administration of justice, which they do not yet perfectly comprehend; the trial by jury, and the multifarious forms of our jurisprudence. They had not been accustomed to distinguish between the slow and cautious advances of *even handed justice*, and the despatch of arbitrary power.* In their simple state of society, when the subjects of litigation were not of great value, the administration of justice might be speedy and simple; but they ought to be aware, that when a society becomes extensive, and its occupations, relations and interests, more numerous, people less acquainted with each other, the laws must be more complex. The trial by jury, is foreign to the customs and manners of their ancestors; it is therefore not to be expected that they should at once comprehend its utility and importance.

The chief advantages which accrued from the change of government, may be summed up in a few words. The inhabitants derived a security from the Indians; a more extensive field, and a greater reward was offered to industry and enterprize; specie became more abundant, and merchandise cheaper. Landed property was greatly enhanced in value. In opposition, it may be said, that formerly they were more content and had less anxiety; there was more cordiality and friendship, living in the utmost harmony, with scarcely any clashing interests. This perhaps,

* Some of the more important lawsuits, however, where more extensive bribery could be carried on, are known to have slept for fifteen years.

is not unlike the notions of old people, who believe that in their early days every thing was more happily ordered.

The idea of their becoming extinct, by dissolving before a people of a different race, and of losing their *moeurs cheries*, might excite unhappy sensations. Already the principal villages look like the towns of the Americans. Are not the customs and manners of our fathers, and of our own youth, dear to us all? Would it not fill our hearts with bitterness, to see them vanish as a dream? Sentiments like these, doubtless sometimes steal into their hearts. They awake, and their HOME has disappeared.

But it is not likely that this state of society could have been of long continuance? The policy which had been commenced of encouraging American settlers, would by this time have overwhelmed them with a torrent of emigration. Isolated as they were, they could not have withstood this accumulating wave of population. Had they been transferred to France, they would have suffered from exactions and conscriptions; had they remained attached to Spain, what miseries might not have assailed them from the convulsed state of the Spanish monarchy. And is it nothing to exchange the name of colonists, creoles, for that of Americans, for that of citizens of an independent state, where they can aspire to the highest employments and honors! There are enough who can feel what it is to be exalted to the dignity of freemen; to the base and ignoble mind which cannot appreciate this blessing, my writings are not addressed. Louisianians, you have now become truly Americans; never will you again be transferred from one nation to another; IF YOU ARE EVER SOLD AGAIN IT WILL BE FOR BLOOD.

At the same time, let us allow, for those emotions which must naturally be felt. Like two streams that flow to each other from remote and distant climes, although at length, included in the same channel, it is not all at once that they will unite their contributary waters, *and mingle into one.*

CHAP. VII.

Climate—Productions, &c..

WHAT is generally remarked respecting the climate of the United States, is particularly applicable to this territory; to wit, variableness. In the spring and winter, during the continuance of south west winds, it is agreeably warm; but by the change of the wind to north west, the most sudden alteration of weather is produced. The winters of St. Louis are usually more mild than in the same latitudes east of the Alleghany mountains, but there are frequently several days in succession of weather as cold as in Canada. Last January (1811) after several weeks of delightful weather, when the warmth was even disagreeable, the thermometer standing at 78 degrees, a change took place, and so sudden, that in four days it fell to 10 degrees below 0. This winter was also remarkable for a circumstance, which the oldest inhabitants do not recollect to have ever witnessed; the Mississippi closed over twice, whereas it most usually remains open during winter.

The settlements of this territory, have in some measure obtained the character of being unhealthy. There is no doubt, but that as in other parts of the western country, which have not been properly put under cultivation, autumnal fevers will prevail. The vicinity of the lowland lakes has not been thought

more unhealthy than at a distance: convenience generally induces the settler to choose this situation. It is a prevailing notion, that to be sick the first summer, is what every settler must expect. This is not generally true. In some parts of the territory, the district of New Madrid, and immediately on the Mississippi, this *seasoning* is severely paid: but in other parts of the territory, I can say with confidence, that no part of the United States is more free from diseases of every kind. From the first of August to the last of September, is considered the most unhealthy. Much depends upon the care which the settler takes in avoiding whatever may tend to produce sickness. The scorching heat of the sun is universally agreed to be unfavorable to health. Night dews and exhalations are not less so. The food of most of the settlers, is not the most wholesome; fat pork, seldom any fresh meat, or vegetables, coarse bread of the Indian corn, the constant use of milk as a part of this ill assorted fare, the whole crowned with drams of abominable whiskey. The exhalations from decaying vegetables, and from enormous masses of putrifying trees, in the new clearings, also contribute to this insalubrity. The fields of Indian corn, with which the settler surrounds his cabin, are thought by many, to be another cause: the foilage of the corn is so rich and massy, that it shades the earth, and prevents the sun from exhaling unwholesome damps.

The last season (1811) was very unhealthy throughout the western country, and this territory experienced fevers in a degree not less than many other places. The natives, and the oldest inhabitants, were attacked as well as strangers. The Missouri, which had never experienced them, did not escape.

This season did great injury to the commencing emigration to this country; many who had suffered, retired from it, and others who had determined to come, changed their minds.

Nature has been more bountiful to this territory, than perhaps to any part of the western country. It possesses all the advantages of the states of Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee, with many which they have not. Proximity to the great mart of the west, will enable the produce of this territory to be the first in arriving, and consequently to bring the highest prices.

The agriculture of this territory will be very similar to that of Kentucky, except, that south of the 35th degree of latitude, cotton may be grown to advantage, and nearly as high as the Missouri, for home consumption. The soil, or climate, of no part of the United States is better adapted to the growth of wheat, rye, barley, and every species of grain. Rice and indigo may be cultivated in many parts of it: and no part of the western country surpasses it for the culture of tobacco, hemp and flax. Except the fig, orange, and a few other fruits, every species common to the United States is cultivated to advantage. There are no where finer apples, peaches, pears, cherries, plums, quinces, grapes, melons, &c.

The manufactures which might be established are various and important. The immense quantity and cheapness of lead, naturally point out this country as the proper one for the different manufactures of that mineral: sheet lead, shot, red and white lead, &c. The abundance of iron ore on the Maramek, St. Francis and Osage rivers, will at no distant period, encourage the establishment of furnaces and forges. The different manufactures of hemp, requi-

site for the lower country, may be here carried on to advantage. There is a great abundance of the finest timber for boat or ship building; in this respect, the situation of the territory has decided advantages over the western country.

The staple articles of trade, are at present, lead, peltry, cotton, tobacco and live stock. It will not be long before there will be added to these the manufactures of lead, hemp and cotton, besides the raw materials themselves; also iron, salt petre and coal, wheat, flour, apples, cider, whiskey, pickled pork, and a great variety of other articles.

CHAP. VIII.

Lead Mines in the district of St. Genevieve—mode of working them—their produce.

The different mines, or *diggings* as they are called, are scattered over the greater part of this district. The exact extent of the mineral veins to the West and South, or towards the Mississippi, is not yet ascertained; but I have been informed, that lead ore is occasionally met with in the territory of Illinois. On the Osage river, and in the country watered by the White river and its tributaries, I have been told by hunters, that lead ore is found in surprising quantities on the very surface of the ground.

These mines have been known almost from the first settlement of the colony; for the discovery would be made as soon as the country could be traversed; the ore being visible in the ravines washed by rains, and in the beds of rivulets. But the first person to examine these mines with skill and care, was a French mineralogist by the name of Renaud, the treasurer of the famous Mississippi company. The supposed wealth in precious minerals of this part of Louisiana, was one of the principal foundations of the company's credit. Renaud, a banker of Paris, who had turned his attention to the study of mineralogy, was engaged by the company to undertake the searching and working of the Louisiana

mines, and was furnished with a number of miners and a considerable body of troops for the purpose.* The number and extent of his diggings attest the assiduity of his researches; the different lead mines at present worked, with few exceptions, follow up the old diggings. He discovered copper mines towards the head of the Mississippi, and on the Illinois river; but despairing of meeting with the precious metals, he confined his labors to the lead mines, and it is said that considerable quantities of lead were smelted by him. The Louisiana company, in consideration of his services, and the expenses which he had incurred, as well as to furnish him the means of supporting the men under his command, granted him several large tracts of land in fee simple.† After being engaged for twelve or fifteen years in this business, Renaud returned to France, and died either on his passage or shortly after his arrival.

After the departure of Renaud, and the total failure of the company, it does not appear that the lead mines were much attended to for many years, nor ever after the crossing of the French settlements to the western side of the Mississippi, and the establishment of St. Genevieve. Since the change of government, the produce of the mines was increased at least ten fold, and the value of the metal a third.

* See Abbe Raynal.

† The grant of the king to the company of the west, was much more extensive than the one to Crozat. A condition was attached to the grants made by the latter to individuals, particularly of mines; but the former, by the 8th article of the letters patent, were authorized to make alienations unconditionally. Mr. Gallatin is under a mistake when speaking of this grant, he observes that all mines which had ceased to be worked for a certain number of years, reverted to the king. This was the case under the grant to Crozat, but the grants to Renaud were made by the Mis-

The object of this view, is to give some account of the different mines, the manner of working them, their produce, &c.

1. What is called a *discovery*, by those engaged in working the mines, is, when any one happens upon an extensive body of ore. This is made, by digging several holes or pits, five or six feet deep, in some spot supposed to contain ore, and if a considerable quantity is at once found, the place is called a discovery; but if only a few pounds, it is abandoned. But the fact is, that there are few places, throughout the mine tract, in which such discoveries cannot be made, though perhaps, with different degrees of labour. Several are made every season, and each continues for a time in vogue, and the miners flock to it from all the others, until the report spreads of the discovery of some new spot, where the ore is found in still greater abundance, and procured with more ease; to this place they are again attracted. A *discovery* is at length fixed upon, which obtains the preference throughout the rest of the season. A discovery is sometimes published when there is not much to warrant, but the number of persons drawn to the place, make one in reality.

sissippi company, or company of the West. It is worthy of attention, that this is the only large allodial grant made by France to an individual, during the whole time she possessed Louisiana; the larger concessions which now embarrass our government so much, have been uniformly made by Spain or Great Britain. The heirs of Renaud were a long time ignorant of the grant, which existed in the archives of the Illinois; the cession to the United States brought it to light. The present claimant, the marquis de Tournon, who married the daughter of madame de Pansemon, (the grand child of Renaud) is said to be a man of fortune and of a most amiable character. I have had occasion to examine this, amongst a great number of other large grants, and I consider it to be the most equitable, fair and authentic, that I have met with.

2. The ore is most commonly found in the slopes, near rivulets, in a clay of a deep red colour; frequently but a few feet from the surface of the ground, and in huge masses, of sometimes a thousand and even two thousand lbs. but most usually in lumps from one to fifty lbs. weight. The rock which is either a primitive limestone, or a kind of sand stone, is struck at the depth of eight or ten feet. Various kinds of clay are often found in these pits, and amongst some other substances, the *blende ore* of zinc has been discovered. The ore contains a considerable proportion of sulphur, arsenic, and it is believed, of silver; though in respect to the last, it has not been sufficiently tested by experiments, to know whether the proportion would repay the trouble and expense of separating. It is highly probable that the ore of some of the mines, may yield it sufficiently. The ore of the Maramek, which, I am informed, has been partially essayed, gave the most flattering result. Above the rock, the ore is found in enormous masses, in strata, apparently horizontal, and often two feet thick, and several of these are passed before the rock arrests the progress of the miner. I have seen pits ten or twelve feet deep where the strata of ore had only been dug through, the digger intending to strike the rock before he attempted to undermine; perhaps, gratifying his vanity with the pleasing contemplation of the shining mineral, his riches. In the rock there appears to be no regular veins; the ore occupies the accidental fissures, as is the case generally in lead mines. Leads, (or loads) are the smaller fissures that connect with the larger, which are called by the miners, *caves*. The ore is what is called potter's ore, or galena, and has a broad shining grain; but there is also, what is call-

ed gravel ore, from being found in small pieces in gravel; and that kind of ore called *floats*, being formed in large irregular, but unconnected masses. The first kind is the most to be depended on: the uncertainty of the floats, and the trouble of smelting the gravel ore, render both of less consequence.—The potter's ore, or galena, has always adhering to it, a sparry matter, which the miners call *tiif*, and which requires to be separated with small picks made for that purpose: this operation is called *cleaning* the ore. The floats have no tiif, and are the most easily smelted.

3. The mode of working the mines is exceedingly simple. The word *diggings*, by which they are known, very well designates the appearance of these places; pits, and heaps of clay thrown out of them, covering sometimes fifty acres or more. With two or three exceptions, there is scarcely any place which might be termed mining. There is but one shaft, which is at the Mine a'Burion, and sunk by Moses Austin. The miners usually work them upon their own account, and dispose of their ore to the smelters: there are some, however, who hire hands by the month, or employ slaves. But experience has shewn that it is best for the interests of both the digger and the smelter to pursue the first mode; from the chance to the one of falling upon a good body of ore, and to the other of the general uncertainty; the keeping a number of persons in constant pay for a length of time before he would be remunerated by a profitable discovery. If mining were carried on in a profitable manner, the case would be different; the profits might then be susceptible of calculation, but this scratching the surface of the earth cannot be attended with certainty. To find a

large body of ore, so near the surface, although not unfrequent, yet cannot be depended upon; it is little better than a lottery. The miners have a variety of rules amongst themselves, to prevent disputes in diggings. Each one takes a pole, and measures off twelve feet in every direction from the edge: the pits seldom exceed eight or ten feet in diameter. He is not permitted to undermine farther than his twelve feet, but must dig a new pit if the ground be not occupied. The only instruments are a pick, wooden shovel, and a sledge hammer, to break rocks. The ore delivered at the pit, sells from twenty to twenty-five dollars per thousand lbs. A digger will sometimes raise two thousand in one day, but notwithstanding, these people do not grow rich faster than their neighbours. What is easily earned is carelessly spent; and besides, it often happens that the miner will work for months without making a cent, before he has the luck of lighting on this treasure. It sometimes happens that he will quit in despair, a pit at which he has been labouring for months, while another leaps in, and after a few hours work, falls upon a body of ore that would have rewarded the labours of the first. The appearance of ore in a pit which has been the work of a few days, is frequently such as to enable him to sell it for four or five hundred dollars. This kind of gaming, for it scarcely deserves any other name, gives rise to great industry and satisfaction in the miners. The constant stretch of expectation in which the mind is kept, gives a zest to their labours.

4. The careless mode of smelting in use proves the great abundance of the ore. There is but one regular furnace, the rest are of a temporary and simple construction. The most common are built

on the declivity of some hill, with stones, open at the top, and with an arch below. Three large logs about four feet long, so as to fit the furnace, are rolled in, smaller pieces of wood placed round, and the ore then heaped up in large lumps: fire is set to it in the evening, and by the next morning there will be a sufficient quantity of the melted lead in the little reservoir or hole, scratched in the earth before the arch, to commence the operation of pouring it into moulds to form pigs. There are usually several of these furnaces joined together. About six thousand lbs. of ore are put into each, and the first smelting produces 50 per cent, besides leaving a quantity of scori or scorched ore. The ashes, which contain particles of ore and scori, are washed, and smelted in a furnace of a different construction, and often yield twenty-five or thirty per cent. more. The ore smelted in this rude way, may be safely considered as yielding seventy-five per cent. There remains a dark green substance called slag, which on late examination, is thought still to retain a proportion of lead worth pursuing. There is no process of pounding or washing, except at the air furnace. The three modes of smelting, to wit, the *open furnace*, the *ash furnace*, and the air furnace, (belonging to Mr. Austin,) have all been introduced since the Americans took possession of the country. The Creoles never smelted any other way than by throwing the lead on log heaps. Each of the diggings has its smelting furnace, and the ore is smelted on the spot. The business of smelting is considered unhealthy, but that of mining remarkably the reverse. This unhealthiness arises from the fumes of the furnace, in which there are quantities of arsenic and sulphur. Animals raised about the furnace are frequently poi-

soned, by licking the ore, or even the stones. Dogs and cats, and even poultry, are seen to fall down suddenly and die.

Having taken this general view, of the mines, their produce, &c. I shall proceed to describe the different *diggings*, more minutely. I have elsewhere observed, that they are scattered over a tract of country about sixty miles in length and twenty-five in breadth, many of those in vogue a few years ago, are now abandoned, for new discoveries. The appearance of the diggings which I have before partly described, is like that of small villages, consisting of a collection of little cabins or huts.—The distance from Mine la Motte, to the Richwood mines, the one on the St. Francis, and the other near the Maramek, is about sixty miles; and from Fourche Courtois, west of the Mine a'Burton (which I have considered as the centre) to the mines nearest the Mississippi, is about twenty-five miles.—There is no doubt but that mines are equally good as any that are wrought may be found out of this tract in every direction; even within a few miles of the Mississippi. Not more than four miles from that river, between col. Hammond's farm and Herculaneum, I picked up in the road, a large lump of ore, which had been washed out by rain a short time before.

Mine a'Burton—It is situated on a handsome stream, a branch of Big river, and large enough to turn a mill the whole year. The village, which is much superior to those which are formed near the diggings, is built on either side of it. The diggings extend around it in every direction, but the principal, which are called the Citadel diggings, are immediately west, on a high prairie. They occupy

about two hundred acres. The surface of the ground has been tolerably well searched; and very great quantities of lead, from the first discovery of this place to the present time, have been made: it will now be necessary to sink into the bowels of the earth before much more can be done: this place has been nearly abandoned by the common diggers.—A shaft, and the first known in this country, has been sunk by Mr. Austin, on a part which falls within his concession. It is about eighty feet in depth, and drifts, in various directions, extend a considerable distance. Twenty hands, might work here at present to advantage, and with sure prospects of profits. They are not yet incommoded by the intrusion of the water, owing to the height of their situation.

The situation of this village is pleasant, there are some handsome dwellings; the inhabitants, about twenty families, turn their attention to agriculture. The surrounding country, although broken in many parts, yet affords a great deal of fine land: the soil, as is general throughout the mine tract, is of a deep red, and supposed to be principally produced by the decomposition of pyrites, which are known to be a manure. Col. Perry shewed me a field in which wheat had been sown for twelve successive years, and no apparent diminution in the crop.

New Diggings, about two miles east of the Mine a'Burton; they were opened about the year 1806: and from the fame which they acquired, drew the miners from nearly all the other mines. It is thought, that during the year, in which these were worked, more lead was made, than has been since, in any one year throughout the mines. For two or three years past, until the present season, these dig-

gings were almost neglected. They are now wrought by several gentlemen with hired hands and slaves. They work in a few pits that had already been sunk to a considerable depth, but had been relinquished on account of the water; this difficulty has been obviated by machinery. There are several farms around it.

Mine Renaud, north of the Mine a'Burton about six miles, is situated upon a branch of the Mineral Fork, a large creek. It has not been wrought for many years, but a new discovery made within a short distance of it, is very flattering. The adjacent country consists of rugged hills, and one might almost fancy himself in the Allegheny mountains.

Elliott's Diggings, Old Mines, and the Mines of Belle Fontaine, may be considered under the same head: in half a day one may easily visit them all.—Elliott's diggings have been worked for several years, by the proprietors, and to advantage. The old mines, for three or four years have been entirely neglected: the land is good, and there is a little settlement of twenty or thirty industrious people who cultivate it. These mines are from six to twelve milēs from the Mine a'Burton. *Brown's Digging's* are the most noted of those near Belle Fontaine.—In the course of the year before last, little short of one million lbs. of lead were smelted here. A considerable quantity is still made, and the appearance of the diggings are flattering, and, but for the dispersion of the miners to other places, might be worked as profitably as any others. They are situated within a short distance of Big river: and about twenty-five miles from Herculaneum.

Bryan's Diggings, a few miles east of Big river. It is about eighteen months since these were disco-

vered: but there has been more lead than at any other place of the district, in the course of the present year. They are situated twenty-five miles from St. Genevieve, and twenty from Herculaneum.

Richwood Mines, are situated about twenty miles N. E. of the Mine a'Burton; they are said to be productive.

Mine a'Joe, on Big river, higher up than Bryan's Diggings, and somewhat further from St. Genevieve. Only a few hands have been employed here during the present season.

Mine a la Motte, four miles from the St. Francis, and on a small stream which falls into that river; it is one of the oldest, and has been constantly wrought for many years, and produces a considerable quantity even on the present mode of mining.—The distance is about thirty miles from St. Genevieve. There is a handsome little village; the inhabitants sober and industrious.

Perry's Diggings, *Mine Liberty*, Fourche Courtois, are new discoveries. There are also some others of less note.

The Big river, Terre Bleu, and the Mineral Fork, are considerable streams which meander through the mine tract. Big river is long, but extremely crooked; in length it falls little short of a hundred miles, from its source to where it discharges itself into the Maramek: and may be ascended upwards of sixty miles in periogues. There are extensive bodies of fine land in its neighborhood, both bottom and upland. The mine tract generally, a thing somewhat unusual in mineral countries, is well adapted to agriculture. No country can be more

plentifully watered, possessing in great abundance the most delightful fountains and rivulets.

It is not more than three or four years since the settlements through this country commenced. The Spanish government held out encouragements to American settlers, and I have been informed that about the years 1801—2, emigration was beginning to flow in rapidly: it is probable in a few years, unless restrained by government, there would have been a considerable population. The farmers in the mine country, will have the advantage of a ready market near them for their produce, and in the winter season, when their farms do not require attention, they will find a profitable employment in transporting their lead to the towns, for the purpose of being shipped.

The following is an estimate from the best information I can procure, of the annual produce of the different mines, and of the number of persons engaged in them; without counting smelters, blacksmiths, and others.

	lbs. lead.	*hands.*
Mine a'Burton	50,000	15
New Diggings	200,000	40
Perry's Diggings, Mine Liberty, &c.	60,000	50
Elliott's Diggings	100,000	20
Mines of Belle Fontaine	300,000	50
Bryan's Diggings	600,000	70
Richwoods	75,000	30
Mine a'la Motte	100,000	40
Fourche Courtois	10,000	15
Mine a'Robins and Mine a'Joe	30,000	20
	1,525,000	350

From this, some estimate may be formed of the produce of these mines. When they come to be extensively worked, I have not a doubt but that they will be able to supply the United States, not only with a sufficient quantity for home consumption, but also with an immense surplus for commerce.

The government has manifested by some acts, an intention of reserving to itself the mineral tracts.—But the policy of this, I think, may be fairly questioned. It is just and wise, that mines of gold and silver, or of other precious minerals, whose value is conventional or imaginary, should be reserved, or at least a proportion of them: but in ores of lead or iron, whose value depends on the labor bestowed on them, and which are besides intrinsically useful, there should be no interference with individuals.—In this country, where almost every tract, and for a great extent, contains mines, the reservation would be almost impracticable. I can no more approve of this reservation, than I do that of salines. I think they are contrary to correct principles in any government, and particularly in the United States.—A just government will never enter into competition, either in trade or manufacture, with individuals.—The individual in such cases, has to contend against fearful odds. There is a littleness in it degrading to the magnanimity of a great republic.

By an act of congress, the governor of the territory is authorised to grant leases, of three years, to persons discovering lead mines, or salines.

The manners of the workmen and of the persons engaged in the mining business, have been represented as barbarous in the extreme. I am told, that a few years ago, there was a collection of worthless and abandoned characters, and that the different mines

were scenes of broils and savage ferocity: but this state of society, has greatly altered since that time. There has been some very atrocious acts committed lately, but it would be unfair to infer from these the general character of those engaged about the mines. —There are many worthy and reputable men engaged in this business, and many respectable families are scattered through the mine country.

CHAP. IX.

Description of the American bottom—Kaskaskia—Fort de Chartres—Monks of La Trappe.

AS this fine tract of land was the original seat of the French settlements, although at present no longer a part of Louisiana, it has appeared to me proper to give some description of it. The American bottom, as it is now called, extends from the Kaskaskia river to the Illinois, the distance of one hundred miles, and on an average six miles wide. It is enclosed to the eastward, by a ridge of highland, which rises abruptly from the plain, in some places presenting rocky precipices, in others beautiful sloping hills, and every where crowned with trees. The ridge is probably five or six miles in width, generally covered with wood, and of a tolerable soil. A number of streams flow from the bluffs, and many fine springs issue from the limestone rocks; but owing to the evenness of the surface of the American bottom, the smaller form ponds and lagoons, which are well supplied with fish, and in the season, covered with millions of wild fowl. There are besides, larger lakes whose banks resemble those of the river, and it is probable, the river was once enclosed by them.

The American bottom, is by far the most beautiful and fertile tract of land I have seen in the western country. This delightful plain, is capable of supporting a greater number of human beings, and

is susceptible of being more highly cultivated than any portion of equal surface in America. No part of the United States, discovers so many vestiges of ancient population; besides the groups of mounds of which I have spoken, the whole of this tract as well as the opposite bank of the Mississippi, present the most surprising traces of a numerous population.—The whole face of the bluff or hill, which encloses it, appears to have been for at least eighty miles, a continued burial ground; and the number of mounds, the astonishing quantity of human bones and fragments of earthen ware, with a thousand other curious appearances, announce that this valley was at one period filled with habitations and villages. I have little doubt that this ground at some remote period of antiquity, was inhabited by at least half a million of souls.

The greater part is a succession of meadows, with here and there thickets of plumb trees and sumack.—The groves of peccanne, oak, or cotton wood, are about the same proportion as we find in parts of the country, which have been a long time settled. Early in the spring and during winter, from the loosness of the soil, the roads are excessively bad, but at other times, nothing can be more delightful than to ride from Kaskaskia to Cohokia. One morning on my way to St. Louis, I was induced to turn out of the road, and ascend the eastern bluff in order to take a view of the plain. It was before sun up, and the wreath of vapour which hung over the river, stretched about midway along the hills which rise on the western side, forming islands in the clouds, a beautiful and picturesque appearance much admired by the lovers of nature. The plain below, was decked out in all its variety and luxuriancy of vegetation,

with here and there a glassy lake, or a column of vapour ascending and slowly rolling into various shapes; but there prevailed almost the quietness and stillness of primeval time. Excepting a few scattered cabbins, and some fields of Indian corn, there were no marks of population. A few deer were seen "shaking the dew drops from their flanks," and bounding towards the hills.

The French settlements in this valley had in the course of sixty years become very considerable.—There were a number of large villages, a lucrative fur trade was carried on, and their agriculture extensive: I find it stated by several writers, that these settlements sent to New Orleans in one year (1746) eight hundred thousand lbs. of flour, while at this time, there was not a single settlement on the western side of the river. The principal villages were Kaskaskia, Prairie du Roche, Cohokia de Chartres, and St. Philip; the two last have entirely disappeared, and the former exhibits the remains or ruins of considerable towns. Kaskaskia which now contains little more than seven hundred souls, is said to have contained at least five thousand. The ruins of ancient buildings, the remains of splendid gardens, the delapidated walls every where visible, furnish ample proof of its former consequence. It is situated about three or four miles from the Mississippi, on the bank of the beautiful little river Kaskaskia, which falls into the Mississippi nine miles below. There is no town in America which bears such appearance of antiquity: the bank on this river, is worn down by long use. We still see the remains of an immense building erected by the Jesuits, immediately on the bank; together with the traces of an elegant garden. On the other side of the

Kaskaskia, a hill four or five hundred feet rises with a steep ascent, and near the top we still see the ruins of a fort or castle. From the top of this hill, I enjoyed a beautiful prospect. The sun was just going down behind the hills on the western side of the mighty river, leaving a golden tinge on the detached and solitary remains in the plain below, and the tufts of trees which grew near them; while darkness seemed already to cover the narrow stream at my feet; a deep silence prevailed over the extensive scene, and no object seemed across it, excepting the domestic herds returning from their pastures, and moving in great numbers to the same point from every quarter.

Fort de Chartres is situated about fifteen miles above Kaskaskia. It is a noble ruin, and is visited by strangers as a great curiosity. I was one of a party of ladies and gentlemen who ascended in a barge from St. Genevieve, nine miles below.—The fort stands immediately on the bank of the river, which has carried off a considerable part of it. The outward wall is still in good preservation, about twenty feet in height, and five or six in thickness.—The walls of the barracks are still standing, but the inside grown up with briars, and trees of a considerable size. The magazine is in a good state, and there are a number of cannon in various parts lying half buried in the earth, with their trunnions broken off. Nearly the whole area, is overgrown with trees, and in some places with thickets almost impenetrable. In visiting the various parts, we started a flock of wild turkies, which had concealed themselves in this hiding place. I remarked a kind of enclosure near which, according to tradition, was fitted up by the officers, as a kind of arbour, where

they could sit and converse during the heat of the day. It is said, that this fort cost the French king upwards of a million of crowns, and was usually garrisoned by a full regiment. The village which grew up near it, has disappeared without leaving a trace behind. This was once a place of refinement and unusual gaiety. Prairie du Roche, is seen at the distance of two or three miles; so called from the smooth rocky precipices, which rise like an artificial wall, and are covered with a smooth sodded bark resembling a glacis. After passing a few hours in examining the curiosities of this venerable place, and gathering strawberries, which are in great abundance in the neighboring plain, we re-embarked, and glided rapidly down the river, to the sound of several musical instruments, and much pleased with our excursion.

Having spoken of the Trappists in my account of the mounds in the American bottom, I here subjoin a description of this singular society.

They at present occupy four or five cabins, built on an Indian mound about fifty yards high, and one hundred and fifty feet square. The other buildings, cribs, stables, &c. ten or fifteen in number, are distributed on the plain below. I was informed that they intended to build on the terrace of the large mound; this will produce a fine effect, it will be seen five or six miles across the plain, and from some points of view ten or twelve. They have about one hundred acres enclosed in three different fields, including the large mound, and several others.

On entering the yard, I found a number of persons at work, some hauling and storing away the crop of corn; others, shaping timber for some intended edifice. The greater number were boys

from ten to fourteen years of age. The effect on my mind, was inexpressibly strange, at seeing them pass and repass each other in perfect silence. But nothing is so strong as nature. I admired the cheerful drollery of a mulatto lad, with one leg, who was attending the horse mill: as the other boys passed by, he contrived by some odd trick or gesticulation, to attract their notice, and commonly succeeded in exciting *a smile*. It was a faint watery gleam of sun shine, which broke through the surrounding gloom. Perpetual silence may be a severe penance, but cannot be a virtue. Good God, thought I, is it possible that the gift which thou bestowedst, to distinguish us amidst thy "vast creation" should be thus despised: for without speech, how could we ever communicate to each other, that we possess a reasoning mind—an emanation of the divine essence?

Fatigued and chagrined at this scene, which I contemplated apparently unobserved, I ascended the mound which contains the dwellings. This is nearly twenty-five feet in height; the ascent rendered easy by a sloping road. I wandered about here for some time, in expectation of being noticed; it was in vain that I nodded to the reverend fathers, or peeped into their cabins. And yet, I own I felt a kind of awe, for which I was unable to discover the most distant cause; perhaps the solemn stillness and the novelty of the scene may account for it. At length sitting down upon a log, I amused myself with the appearance of the different figures as they passed. I had read of these solitary men, but here they really existed. It awakened a thousand recollections of history or romance, as they passed by me like phantoms, and I gave a loose to my reflections.

I had the good fortune to be accosted by a young man, who I discovered to be in their employment as a kind of steward, though not otherwise attached to the society. This was no small relief: I made a variety of enquiries after him, but to very little purpose: he was however obliging, and promised to speak in my behalf to Father Joseph, who soon made his appearance; I learned that he had the government of the society in the absence of Father Urbain. He is a sprightly and intelligent man, and to my surprise, talked with wonderful volubility, which excited in me almost as much astonishment as was experienced by Robinson Crusoe in his island, when addressed by his parrot. He invited me into the watchmaker's shop, for they carry on several trades, to assist in supporting the institution. The shop was well furnished; part was occupied as a laboratory and library; the latter but indifferent; a few medical works of no repute, and some theological folios. Several men were at work, and some boys busily employed. One poor fellow, ten or twelve years of age, attracted my attention and pity. He was seated by a stove, making strokes on a slate, and appeared to have just risen from the bed of sickness, or rather from the tomb. Emaciated to the last extreme, his face was pale, cold and bloodless, his lips purpled, his sunken eye marked by a livid streak, and his countenance overspread with a listless stillness. Had it not been for the feeble motion of his hand as he drew it over the slate, and the occasional raising of his heavy and languid eyelid, I could have believed that the tenant of this sad and melancholy ruin, had gone to seek a happier abode. Alas! poor lone creature, thou hast no mother, no sister, to watch over thee with the tenderness and

solicitude which none but a mother or sister can feel! Father Joseph advances towards him with a tenderness and benignity of countenance which I did not expect in a Trappist: he endeavoured to cheer him by speaking pleasantly to him, but the poor fellow had lost the power of smiling; his physiognomy was locked up in rigid coldness, which nothing but returning health, or the warmth of parental affection could soften.

Father Joseph inquired whether I had dined, and being informed in the negative had something prepared. My fare was simple, consisting chiefly of vegetables; though not less acceptable, for it was given with good will. Having returned thanks to the Father for his hospitality, I took my leave.

I learned that the family of the Trappists consists of about eighty persons, a considerable number of whom are not at home. The boys are generally American; the men principally German and French. They expect a considerable accession from Europe. It is about a year since they have been fixed in this place. Last summer proved fatal to five or six, and few escaped the prevailing fever. They deny that the place is unhealthy, and say that those who died were chiefly old men; the meager diet, and scanty nourishment, which is taken by such as have made the vow, must certainly render them more susceptible of decease. They first settled in Kentucky, afterwards came to Florissant, near St. Louis, and from thence to their present residence. They are supposed to be an industrious well meaning people, and I should be willing to see them treated with respect, and even encouragement in all but one thing; the education of children. This is foreign from the original design of their institution, which is a total

seclusion from the world. Such a place is for a thousand reasons not calculated for a school: a boy brought up here to the age of one and twenty, can never be fit for any thing but a Trappist. It may be said that an assylum is here offered to those in extreme distress—to those unfortunate wretches, who, aged and friendless, are in danger of perishing for want. Happily for our country such instances are rare indeed. Or for those unhappy orphans, who may be exposed from their helplessness to be without support, and to whom, inhuman barbarity may have denied a home and a protection. I may safely say that these are as rare as the others. In America, it is not necessary as in Europe, to give a fee with a boy who is bound apprentice to any particular calling; on the contrary there is scarcely any mechanic who will not gladly take him and teach him his trade for the service which he may render, before the expiration of the apprenticeship.

A brief history of this singular institution, may not be unentertaining. The monastery of La Trappe was situated in the province of Perche, in France: in one of the most solitary spots that could be chosen. It was founded in 1140, by Rotrou Count of Perche. This monastery had fallen into decay, and its discipline much relaxed, when reformed by the Abbe Rance, 1664. Rance had met with some misfortune, which rendered life hateful to him, some assert the sudden death of madame Montbazon, whose favourite lover he had been. He had been a man of fashion, and possessed some pretentions to literature; he is said to have translated the poems of Anacreon. Into this monastery, whither he came, he carried a reform of the most savage austerity. The vow was perpetual silence; the miserable Trappist denied

himself during his existence, every comfort of life. He laid himself on a stone, and was frequently called in the dead of night to his devotions. His food was bread and water, and this but once in the twenty-four hours. Each day he removed from his intended grave one spadefull of earth, in order to keep ever present to his mind that he must soon entirely cease to be of this world. A French writer, (who is, however, unfriendly to the institution,) says—*C'est la qu'ils se retirent, ceux qui ont commis quelque crime secret dont les remords les poursuivent; ceux qui sont tourmente's de vapeurs melancholiques et religieuses; ceux qui out oublie' que Dieu est le plus mise'ricordieux des peres, et qui ne voyent en lui, que le plus cruel des tyrans, &c.*

Such institutions, it must be acknowledged, are not treated with much respect in the United States; we can hardly speak of them with candour, or think of them without prejudice. It is true, this is the land of freedom and toleration, but it is also the land of good sense. Every one may pursue his spiritual or temporal happiness, in what way he pleases; but his neighbours have also the liberty of laughing at him, if in the pursuit of that happiness, he exhibits singularities which appear to the rest of the world ridiculous.

VIEWS OF LOUISIANA.

IN THREE BOOKS.

BOOK III.

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CHAPTER I.

State of Louisiana—boundaries—general description.

THE state of Louisiana is bounded in the following manner: "beginning at the mouth of the river Sabine, thence by a line to be drawn along the middle of said river, including all its islands, to the 32d degree of north latitude, thence due north, to the northernmost part of the 33d degree of north latitude, thence along the said parallel of latitude, to the Mississippi, as follows: from the 31st degree of north latitude on the Mississippi, along the said parallel of latitude, to the eastern branch of Pearl river, and down Pearl river to its mouth, thence to the mouth of the Sabine. It is bounded on the north and east

by the Mississippi territory, the south by the ragged coast of the gulph of Mexico, and on the other sides by unoccupied lands of the United States.

Its shape is exceedingly irregular, arising from the unevenness of the coast, and from the line on the eastern side commencing only at the 31st degree of north latitude. Were it to begin at the 33d, so as to correspond with the line on the western side, the state would be left in a more compact and definite shape. Something has been said of carrying this into effect, if it should meet the approbation of the people of the Mississippi territory. Much might be said in favour of it; it would tend to lessen the expense of state government, to both, and give that right to the Mississippi territory sooner than could be well expected without. But the great objections, and indeed they seem almost insurmountable, arise from the difficulty of subjecting that territory to the civil law, after having been so long accustomed to a different: and to introduce the law into this state, at once, would be highly impolitic, if practicable.

With respect to the surface of the state, it may be easily comprehended under three general descriptions:

1. The tract of upland—
2. The alluvia and sunken lands—
3. The prairies or savannas.

I. The tract of upland constitutes three fifths of the whole state; all that part of Florida above Iberville, which has been added to the state, is of this description. For fifteen or twenty miles from the Mississippi it is covered with heavy timber, principally oak, poplar, walnut, the magnolia grandiflora, and a great variety of other laurels. After this, we find with little variation, open pine woods, except-

ing on the banks of the streams, which are numerous and pleasant. On the other side of the Mississippi, west of the alluvia (which are generally bounded by the Bayou Mascon, Bayou Boeuf, and the Teche) the upland commences, covered, with but little variation, by the long leafed pine. It is divided to the south west by the avenue of Red river, beyond this, it resumes its original appearance, with little interruption, west to the Sabine: but in advancing to the gulph of Mexico, a change is gradually perceived. Within thirty miles of the Opelousas church, the pine woods imperceptibly gives place to groves of dwarf oak and hickory, with spots of ground covered only with grass; these groves at length appear only on the water courses, and we enter the boundless prairies of Opelousas.

II. The prairies or savannas, and alluvia, scarcely constitute the other two fifths of the state. Besides those on the Washita, and a few of no great extent, west of Black river, there are none of any consequence, except those of the Opelousas and Attakapas. These constitute a tract of nearly eighty miles in length, from east to west, and fifty in breadth. The prairies of Opelousas have a waving surface, though no where rising into hills; those of the Attakapas are flat and level, covered with a more luxuriant and a coarser vegetation. The whole country is chequered by the woody margins of streams, called bayou's,* though different from the refluent waters of the river. The parts of the country in England, where the grounds are divided by hedge rows, might seem miniatures of the bold designs which na-

* They are natural drains of the waters accumulated by the rains in the prairie; ponds and even lakes are formed in places by the rains. This arises from the uneven surface of the ground.

ture has displayed in laying off this tract. The fringes of wood on the borders of the bayou seldom exceed a half mile in width, and consist of live oak, magnolia, &c. and on the wet parts, of cypress. The rivers Teche and Vermillion, have the largest tracts of timbered land, and are consequently the best settled parts of the prairies. The prairies will be found in the aggregate, the least valuable of the public domain; if they be surveyed and laid off, as at present contemplated, it will be impossible to sell them for more than a trifle: who would purchase a tract of land situated perhaps at the distance of several miles from wood or water? The fact is, that the greater part is only fit for pasturage, and there is little likelihood of any other use being made of it, for many years to come. From late observations, however, it is probable, that in time, trees might be cultivated: the soil is growing richer from the manure left by the numerous herds of cattle which continually cover it.

III. The alluvion lands constitute the third division. Much erroneous calculation has been indulged on this head. It has been a prevailing opinion, that by far the greater part of the state is composed of this kind of land. From what I have said, it may be seen that it does not constitute more than the fifth of the whole: but of this portion, there is not more than a fourth which can be considered irreclaimable. When I say irreclaimable, I do not mean to convey the idea of any physical impossibility, but the great length of time which must elapse before it can be done. I am well satisfied that there is much less of the western side of the Mississippi rendered useless by the annual floods, than is usually stated. This observation has been several times repeated in differ-

ent parts of these views, and I find no reason to change my opinion. There is certainly much sunken and overflowed land, and perhaps not to be reclaimed without immense labour, and between the Washita and the Mississippi, perhaps one third is of this kind. But there is nothing more incorrect than the general and vague accounts of writers on this subject, who state that the western side of the Mississippi is annually inundated to the distance of *thirty or forty, and even sixty miles.* The settlements established within a few years between the Washita and the Mississippi, prove the error of the opinion to which so many have given currency. It is true as a general rule, that the bank of the Mississippi, is the highest part of the alluvion ground, but this is not always the case; the bank of the bayous and of the lakes are as high, if not higher. On many of the bayous there are extensive tracts of upland, and this rarely occurs on the bank of the river itself below the Arkansas. Wherever these are to be found, we may safely conclude that the ground is but little subject to be covered by the overflowing of the waters. The road from Concordia, (opposite the town of Natchez) to the upland on the other side of Black river, is but seldom rendered impassible for travellers on horseback. I consider the extent of the lands subject to be inundated by the Mississippi, on the eastern side, as not exceeding fifteen miles, until we come to Black river. 1. From the foregoing outline it will appear that the alluvion lands are chiefly on the western side of the Mississippi, (the bottoms on the eastern side are not remarkable) and are finest along this river from the 33d degree, extending back to the distance of twenty miles, but suddenly widening on the approach to Red river. 2. On the

Red river, of an average width of ten miles, widening on its approach to the Mississippi. 3. Below Red river and constituting the western angle of the Delta. I think it probable, that on a better acquaintance these tracts will be found to contain by far the most valuable portions of the public domain; the proportion of sunken lands, reclaimable only with great difficulty, is less than the proportion of unproductive pine woods, or of prairie not susceptible of cultivation from the want of wood and water.

In order to give the reader a more satisfactory view of the subject, I will enter into some detail on the topography of different sections, or natural divisions.

1. *Section of the state between Red river, Mississippi, and the line of the 33d degree of north latitude.*

This embraces an extensive portion of the state, and of a character in many respects different from the rest. The greater part is of an uneven surface, in places hilly, and invariably covered with the long leafed pine. The soil, we may naturally suppose from its growth, to be poor, if not barren. But I have been informed by intelligent persons, that it is preferable to the pine lands of Georgia. There are no sand hills, and every where a luxuriant herbage. I have passed over some parts which are rocky, but in general we find a light grey colored earth, mixed with a considerable portion of sand. It is supposed that wheat might be grown in this soil to advantage. There are a great many beautiful streams of clear delightful water, upon whose borders, the lands are rich and clothed with a variety of trees, the magnolia and other laurels, always forming the greater proportion. These strips of land, or bottoms, rarely

exceed a mile in width. On the roads between the Washita and Red river, there are a number of scattered settlers, who live tolerably well; the adjacent pine wood enabling them to keep large herds of cattle. The country is generally healthful, and when it becomes settled, will be one of the most pleasant in the state. The Washita, Catahoula, and Little river, are the principal streams by which this tract is watered. On the Washita there is said to be upland, similar to that of the Missouri, and which is well suited to the raising of wheat. The country abounds with streams, which afford mill seats, but it is feared that the torrents which they roll along after heavy rain, would sweep away any work that might be erected. On some of the more considerable creeks, or rivulets, it often happens that the whole valley is overflown. Their channels are deep, and many of them abound in quicksands, but their beds, are usually composed of gravel or stone.

The exception to this general description consists in the tracts between the Washita and the Mississippi, the greater part of which is low land. Black river, which loses its name at the junction of the Tensa, Washita and Catahoula, runs through the lower part of this tract. The lands on the borders of this river, are too low, but not annually subject to be overflown. There had been settlers for several years on its banks, all the way to the mouth, previous to 1811, but the flood of that year, (one of the most remarkable experienced in this country,) compelled the greater part of them to abandon their plantations. The lands between the Black river, Red river, and the Mississippi, are amongst the lowest in the alluvion tract. There are some lakes; that of Concordia for instance, connected with the

three rivers before mentioned, by bayou's diverging from all sides. On some of these bayou's the land is sufficiently high to admit of settlements. The greater part of this alluvion soil is tinged with red, from the admixture of the sediment brought down Red river, with that of the Mississippi. The tract enclosed by the Red river, Mississippi, Tensa, and a long narrow lake connected with the Tensa lake, called lake Anderson, forms the county of Concordia, which is almost an island, the east end of this lake approaching within a few miles of the Mississippi. Opposite this tract, on the western side of Black river, there is another of nearly equal size, but which is a complete island, formed by the river just mentioned, with the bayou Saline, and the Catahoula lake and river. In this tract, there are no settlements; the lands are extremely low. The lake called Catafoulouctа, situated on this tract, is said to have some high land on its borders. The Catahoula lake, is about thirty miles in length, and about six miles wide. It becomes nearly dry in autumn: at that season, and early in the spring, the ground is covered with fine herbage, and is resorted to by numerous herds of cattle. Besides several smaller streams, this lake receives the Little river, a fine stream more than two hundred miles in length; it is discharged into Washita, by the Catahoula river, and into Red river by bayou Saline.

The Tensa, which enters from the eastern side, forms, with the Washita and bayou Long, another island of an oval shape, and about fifty miles in circumference. On this there are no settlers, though it is not commonly subject to be overflown; it is level rich soil; in 1811, it was pretty generally covered with water to the depth of about one f[illegible]

Trifling levees would secure this tract, as indeed all those islands, if it were not for the numerous bayous of a smaller size which every where intersect the country; entirely to close up their entrances, would be attended with great labor. Immediately above this island, there is another called Sicily island, a greater part of which, is rich upland, and supports a considerable settlement. It is about thirty miles in circumference. At the lower end of Sicily island the bayou Tensa spreads into a lake of fifteen or twenty miles in length, and nearly parallel with the Mississippi; at one place near the settlement of Palmyra, it approaches within two or three miles of the Mississippi, and is at length connected with that river, it is supposed somewhere near Stack island, and forming one of its out-lets. Besides the Tensa lake, this bayou forms several others, of which lake Providence is the most considerable. Their banks are high, and rarely, if ever, subject to the effects of the floods of the Mississippi. The Tensa lake receives two very considerable streams: the riviere aux Boeufs, and the bayous Mascon: both are supposed to have their sources partly in the pine woods, between the Washita and the Arkansas, and partly in some lakes, formed by the out-lets from the Arkansas and Mississippi: but from the clearness of their streams it is probable that they receive the greater part of their waters from the upland springs and rivulets. The bayou Mascon, may be considered the boundary of the Mississippi swamp, and seldom recedes to a greater distance than fifteen miles from the river. The land between it and the riviere aux Boeufs is generally high prairie, the lower part rises in bluffs of fifty or sixty feet high. There are several connecting bayous between it

and the bayou Mascon. The strip of land, perhaps on an average ten or fifteen miles in width, between those two bayous, is generally above the reach of inundation. Between the riviere aux Boeufs and the Washita, the land is low, and the overflowing of either river is sometimes ready to pour over the bank of the other. On a slight glance, this country, between the Mississippi and Washita, nearly four hundred miles on the river, and generally supposed to be annually covered with water to the depth of several feet, is divided into long narrow strips, by the parallel courses of the Mississippi, bayou Mascon, riviere aux Boeufs, and the Washita; with numerous connecting bayous, which in time, will be as useful as artificial canals; it is also interspersed with lakes whose banks are above the reach of inundation. During the flood of 1811, two Indians who had set off from fort Adams, arrived at Sicily island, bringing with them several horses. They declared that they had to swim but two bayous, having followed the ridges of high land.

All those bayous are deep, and at all seasons afford sufficient water to navigate the largest barges. Their courses are generally crooked, and narrow, in places perhaps choked with logs and rafts. The Washita as high up as the 33 deg. of N. lat. is seldom more than forty miles from the Mississippi.—Two roads have been cut, one to fort Mira, and the other to bayou Berthelemie, thirty miles above; they pass through the thick cane brakes, and in high water, it is necessary to swim a great number of bayous, and to wade through places overflown.

I am conscious how difficult it is to convey any idea of a country, particularly such as this, without

a map; I do not know of any extant, which I can recommend to the reader: that of Lafon, is undoubtedly the best yet published, but from my own observation, and what I have learned from others, it is by no means to be relied on. It was, however, the best that could be made at the time of its publication, but since then, the country has become much better known. The manuscript map of Mr. Darby is greatly superior, the greater part of it being taken from actual survey.*

The principal settlements are those of Concordia, Catahoula, and Washita. In the two last, the settlers cultivate cotton, but in the other, their principal dependence is in the raising of stock and the culture of Indian corn, and they generally live poor, having but few of the comforts and conveniences of life.

2. *The alluvion tract of Red river—Avoyelle—Land around the mouth of Red river—Atchafalaya.*

The alluvion lands of Red river are remarkably distinguished from those of the Mississippi, by their deep red color, arising as is supposed by Dr. Hunter, from the decomposition of pyrites, or a mixture of some metallic substance. The lands on the Atchafalaya, and on numerous bayous at present fed by the waters of the Mississippi, are of this description: the sediment brought down by Red river, appears to predominate through a very extensive portion of the alluvion soil west of the Mississippi.

* This has since been published, with an admirable geographical tract on Louisiana. No one desirous of an accurate acquaintance with that country should be without them.

If it is difficult to give an idea of the country bordering on the Mississippi by a mere description in words, it is still more so with respect to the valley of Red river. Its irregular and confused shape, "if shape it can be called," baffles every attempt to compare it to any known figure in mathematics or in nature. This irregularity is principally caused by the strange and eccentric course which that river pursues. Instead of flowing in a regular channel, it divides its waters into a hundred streams, separating and again uniting so as to render it difficult to trace the principal river. Large tracts of primitive ground, or upland, in the ever changing course of this river, have been cut off from the main land, are now perfectly disconnected with it, and surrounded by alluvion; the current having in time entirely worn away the primitive ground. There are a great number of bayous, or effluent streams, which show incontestable proofs, of having been at different periods, the beds of the river. It is to be observed, that on the N. E. side, the Red river is almost invariably bounded by the primitive land, and the irregularities just mentioned, occur chiefly on the S. western side: from this it would appear, that this river, like the Mississippi, is progressing in its general course eastward, and that it could never have been much further in that direction than at present. Red river, would be almost as bold a stream as the Mississippi, but for the great diminution of its waters by subdivision and the formation of lakes; it has had the good effect of rendering the lands in its vicinity more free from inundation, than those of the Mississippi. About 32 deg. 40, long. 96 deg. 15, Red river separates into two branches, which unite about ten miles above Natchitoches. The eastern

branch retains the name of the river, is the most considerable, but obstructed by the great raft. A bayou which makes out on the east side of this branch, spreads out into lake Bestianeau, and afterwards joins the main stream. The western branch does not flow in a well defined channel, but at short intervals, spreads out into lake Pisaquie, lake Maldoux, and lake Long, connected on the east side by bayou Pierre (properly a continuation of the west branch) and immediately before the junction of the two branches, the W. branch, by an effluent bayou, contributes with the streams from the upland in forming the lake Espagnol.* The island, or tract, enclosed by the two branches, is of an oval form, and not less than two hundred miles in circumference; a considerable part is said to consist of low sunken lands, but there must doubtless be a large portion of a superior quality. Immediately below the village of Natchitoches, the river again separates into three branches, the middle one being the principal. The eastern is called Fausse riviere, (False river) and is connected with several lakes to the N. E. of it. The western branch is called the river of the Post, and has on its S. W. side a number of lakes formed partly by its own effluent waters, and those of the upland streams: the lake a'Case is the largest of these.—Between this and the middle branch, several islands† are formed by the connecting bayous. In the times of high water there is but little difference in the size of these three branches; the river of the Post has

* This is more or less the case with all the lakes in the vicinity of Red river. The streams from the high, or primitive ground, are extremely well supplied with water.

† Amongst others the isle of the Natchez, where that unfortunate people made their last stand.

been preferred on account of the distance being shorter, but the middle branch is much the clearest, though nothing more than a deep gut or bayou, twenty or thirty yards in width, scarcely sufficient for a long barge to turn round. The principal settlement of Natchitoches, is situated upon it, and forms an almost continued village for forty or fifty miles. The water never rises so as to render it necessary to add to the natural banks. These branches re-unite fifteen or twenty miles above the Rapids. The Red river receives from the N. E. side lake Yac, which discharges itself by the rivers Rara and Marteu. From the re-union of these branches, the river pursues a tolerably well defined course to the Mississippi, losing its waters by only two or three bayous, and not forming any considerable lakes.—Bayou Boeuf, which is formed partly by a large stream from the upland, and partly from the waters of Red river, may be regarded as the boundary of the Red river alluvion in that quarter.

In casting the eye over the map, it will be seen that a triangle is formed, of which the bayou Boeuf is the base, and Red river and the Mississippi the two sides. It is in this triangle that the largest body of low sunken lands, are to be found in the state, particularly in the angle of Mississippi and Red river, and round the curious island of Avoyelle. From marks on the trees, it appeared to me that the land had been overflowed to the depth of ten feet.—The Avoyelle is a body of primitive ground, about thirty miles in circumference, the growth similar to that of West Florida, in the neighborhood of the Mississippi; the soil is not remarkably rich, but affords a handsome settlement. The Atchafalaya of Avoyelle, flows through the triangle, in a course pa-

rallel to the bayou Boeuf, and is without any settlement; the land low. The lands on the bayou Boeuf, particularly on the upper part of it, are amongst the best in the state, commonly of two miles in width, covered with impenetrable thickets of cane; the soil extremely rich, of a red color, similar to that on the Atchafalaya of Red river. Of late years, several settlements have been formed in this bayou, and the lands were growing into high repute previous to the depreciation in the price of cotton.—The lands on the Atchafalaya of Red river, are of nearly the same quality, but do not possess the same depth.* There are still but few settlers. Its navigation is interrupted by rafts and other obstructions.

The valley of Red river is susceptible of a very wealthy and extensive population; with the exception of the triangle before described, being but little subject to overflowing: the proportion of sunken ground, is scarcely equal to the part which might be cultivated, and the proportion altogether irreclaimable, is very small. The best cotton of the United States is produced here, and brings in market, generally, two cents more in the pound. Tobacco and indigo are also amongst the articles of culture. The principal settlements, are those of Natchitoches, bayou Rapide, bayou Robert, bayou Boeuf, and Atchafalaya.

The greater part of the tract between the Atchafalaya, bayou Plaquemine, and the Mississippi, is low and uninhabitable land, of which no use can be made in its present state. The settlements of Pointe Cou-

* The grant of the United States, to the Marquis de la Fayette has been chiefly located on this bayou.

pee, West Baton Rouge, and Plaquemine, form trifling exceptions. The route to the Attakapas and Opelousas, usually taken by boats, is through the bayou Plaquemine.

The last and largest body of alluvion in the state, is enclosed by the bayou Plaquemine, Atchafalaya, a bayou which makes out from it, (and forms the grand lake, connected with the la d'eau Salec,) the sea, and the Mississippi. This tract is interspersed with a number of very large lakes, connected with the sea. Bayou la Fourche and Atchalafaya pass through it: the latter is lost in a variety of lakes and bayous before it enters the gulph. This land is rapidly gaining from the sea; the large lakes are shallow, and perceptibly filling up every year, by the sediment of the Mississippi. There is some land around them susceptible of being cultivated, but generally, there is no habitable land on this tract, except on the bayou la Fourche, and Mississippi. The bayou la Fourche is a beautiful natural canal, admitting of settlements on its banks for eighty miles from where it issues from the Mississippi. When the Mississippi is high, it is about one hundred and fifty yards in width, its banks, which rarely overflow, are guarded by a slight levee of two feet high: it is free from obstructions the whole way to the gulph, and there are said to be sixteen feet of water on the bar. For the distance of sixty miles, a single horse might draw a large boat, so clean and even are its banks. In riding along it, the idea of a magnificient artificial canal was continually occurring to my mind: art cannot surpass it. The lands are in many places a mile and an half in depth on both sides. It is supposed, that on this bayou, and on others connected with it, there is twice as much

habitable land, as there is from its entrance, on both sides of the Mississippi, to New Orleans. For nearly thirty miles down, on each side, there appears a continued village, and it is tolerably well settled for thirty miles further.

3. *Attakapas and Opelousas.*

Opelousas is separated from the Attakapas by bayou Fusillier, which connects the Teche with the Vermillion, and is a natural canal, which might with ease be rendered navigable. On the S. W. side of the Vermillion it is separated by the Carancro, a stream which takes its rise in the prairies, and falls into the Vermillion. The traveller, on approaching the Teche from the Vermillion, easily discerns where the high primitive ground gradually descends into the lower prairies of the Attakapas. These, I have already observed, are covered with a coarser vegetation, and are better wooded than those of the Opelousas, but there is a much greater portion of them waste, and subject to be drowned by rains, and are even sometimes inundated by the Teche: the greater part is probably alluvion, at least for a mile or two on the S. W. side, and the whole on the other. The soil is extremely rich, though of a texture somewhat too close, liable to bake and become hard and stiff. Cotton is at present the principal culture; the sugar-cane has been found to succeed as well if not better than on the Mississippi. A number of planters, of late, are turning their attention to it. Several cotton planters of the Mississippi territory, have sold their plantations, and commenced establishments on the Teche. On lake Tasse there is a sugar establishment of

some years standing, but this is the only one which has yet been completed.

The Vermillion and the Teche are the principal rivers of the Attakapas, neither of them formed by the effluent waters of other rivers, but rising in the high prairies of the Opelousas; the Vermillion in the neighborhood of the Opelousas church, and the Teche considerably north of it. Their general courses are nearly the same to the lake Tasse, where the Teche winds somewhat east of south. Their channels are deep, the waters of a dark color, and not reckoned very good for use. They are connected by streams from the lake Tasse. Schooners and light vessels may ascend in both as far as this place, from the Vermillion bay, or Berwick's bay, into which these rivers are discharged. The Teche is a much larger and longer river than the other, being upwards of two hundred miles in length. The Tasse is a beautiful lake of clear water, about ten miles in circumference: there are plantations around it, on the eastern side, the other is entirely bare of wood.

The principal settlements of the Attakapas are on each side of the Teche (though mostly on the western,) and on the Vermillion. Besides the culture of cotton, maize, &c. they have the advantage of those extensive natural meadows to support their herds; from the mildness of the climate, little or no trouble is requisite to keep them. The inhabitants of the Attakapas are generally wealthy, and live as luxuriously as the planters of the Mississippi. It is not considered healthy, perhaps, less so than on the coast of the Mississippi. On the whole, it is destined to become one of the richest districts of Louisiana.

The immense tract of open plains or meadows, which constitutes the Opelousas, boasts of advantages superior to all the riches of the Teche or the Mississippi, in the salubrity of its air and the beauty of its surface. Free from stagnant waters, with the exception of a few ponds in the prairies, the atmosphere is not poisoned by noxious vapours, and open to the breezes from the gulph, it enjoys a cool and refreshing temperature, while the rest of the state is suffering from the effects of a close and sultry air.—Without fear of contradiction, I may pronounce the Opelousas to be by far the most healthy part of the state. Nothing can be more beautiful and cheering to the traveller, than the prospects and views which this country affords, as he passes from one prairie into another, for they are separated by some streamlet fringed with wood, and each prairie is known by a particular name. There is nothing wild or savage, yet the scenery is not tame or motonous: there is a sufficient variety and succession of those scenes, which sooth the mind, or inspire with lively and pleasing emotions. I passed through them last May, when they appeared to great advantage. The distance of my journey was forgotten while I gazed with delight upon the waving surface of these meadows, now covered with deep green, and of extent, in some places bounded only by the horizon, in others by skirts of wood, dimly appearing as in some distant isle of the sea; while a thousand brilliant and odoriferous flowers shed their perfume upon the air. The plantations scattered along the water courses on the outside of the fringe of wood, the vast herds of cattle roaming at random over the plains, the galloping herdsmen, and the solitary traveller, are the objects which give life to the pleasing picture.

The settlements are entirely on the water courses, which chequer this plain; settlers turn their attention principally to grazing; cotton is however cultivated to advantage. The number of cattle composing the herds which some of the wealthier possess, would in other parts of the United States, be considered incredible; there are several who mark from one to two thousand calves every year. The cattle driven to New Orleans for sale, bring from fifteen to twenty dollars the head.

The Mentou is as large as the Teche, and falls into the gulph considerably the S. W. of it, as also does the Carcasou: on both these rivers there are said to be considerable bodies of habitable land. The Sabine, which constitutes the boundary in that quarter, is a very considerable river, but is not at present susceptible of navigation, on account of obstructions in its course. The lands immediately in its neighborhood are good.

The route to the Opelousas and to the Attakapas, is either by Plaquemine, as before mentioned, or by the ferry of la Fourche. This is also the route in time of high water, to Rapide, or Natchitoches, for persons going by land. I rode along the bayou la Fourche about twenty-five miles, then crossed over to the out-let of a small bayou, fifteen or twenty feet wide, called the canal, from its having been somewhat improved by labor, and forming a convenient communication with the lakes, and the Teche: following this bayou or canal about fifteen miles, I came to the ferry kept by a German, who has the exclusive right from the state, on condition of keeping suitable accommodations. Here I embarked, in the evening, on a platform erected on two large canoes, with a railing in the middle, for

the purpose of confining our horses, and after passing through lake Platte, and several other lakes and bayous, landed about three o'clock next morning, two miles up the Teche. The distance twenty-three miles. The night being pleasant, and no wind stirring, I had an agreeable passage. The lakes are not more than three or four miles in width, but the narrow bayous connecting them are so numerous, that it requires considerable experience to find the way. On my return I was less fortunate; I found at the ferry several persons who had been waiting for three days, the wind rendering it useless to attempt to cross; their patience was by this time totally exhausted, and in the evening, it was determined to start, though the wind had abated but little of its violence. With some difficulty we reached Berwick's bay. The wind here became too strong, and we were compelled to put to shore on a little point of land overgrown with palmettoes,* where we found two or three fishermen stretched before a little fire. The tide was up, the bank of the lake not more than two feet high. These lakes are enveloped in the most gloomy forests of oak, cypress and ash, upon whose boughs the long moss,† or Spanish beard, is suspended in enormous masses, almost shutting out the light from these dreary spots, while underneath, there is an impenetrable thicket of underwood, and

* A plant very common in the lower part of Louisiana—the leaves so disposed as to bear a strong resemblance to a very large fan. It grows upon the more elevated spots of ground.

† I have often puzzled myself to find out some known object to which the appearance of this curious production might be compared. Chateaubriand compares them to enormous ghosts! The best I can think of, is to the shattered sails of a ship, after a storm, the canvass hanging down in a thousand ragged shreds.

smaller trees and vines. About 12 o'clock, the wind having somewhat abated, we struck across the bay, but before we could reach bayou Long, the approach of a storm, which every moment threatened to burst upon us, compelled us to put into one of the first bayous which communicate with lake Platte.—We had scarcely reached the entrance, before it began to pour down torrents of rain accompanied by incessant peals of thunder. Without the slightest shelter except our great coats, we found our situation extremely uncomfortable. About day light we continued our voyage, opposed by wind and current, the rain continuing but with little intermission until we arrived on the other side, which was not until four in the evening, almost exhausted, having been compelled to stand up the greater part of the time, and chilled to the very heart. Here the attention and kindness of the good people, soon made us forget what we had endured, or remembered only to felicitate ourselves on its having passed. These accidents do not frequently occur.

4. *Settlements of La Fourche—Coast of the Mississippi—Fausse riviere.*

The settlers of La Fourche, are chiefly what the French call *petits habitants*, small planters, and are therefore, more numerous than on the coast, for it requires many cottages to make one chateau. There are, however, some extensive establishments.—Lands have risen here in price, since they have grown in demand for sugar plantations, and many of the *petits habitants* bought out. The settlers from the Canal, up to the mouth of the Fourche, are principally of Spanish origin, and speak but little

French. They are a poor and miserable population; seem lazy and careless, and are destitute of those little comforts, and that neatness, which are found in the cottage of the poorest French creole.

The most pleasant part of Louisiana, when we take into consideration the comforts and conveniences of life, is that which is called the *coast*, and proves to us what may be done by the art and industry of man, even in those parts which nature has left rude and unsightly. It affords one of the strongest arguments in favor of civilization, and ought to go far in reconciling the philanthropic mind to the circumstance of the present inhabitants, having shoved off the pitiable, careless race, who first possessed it Would it be too much to say, that this improvement and cultivation of the face of nature, was the condition on which the Creator gave to the human race the lordship of the earth! Even the garden of Eden required the fostering care of Adam and his partner:

> "On to their morning's rural work they haste,
> Among sweet dews and flow'rs; where any row
> Of fruit trees, over woody, reach'd too far
> Their pamper'd boughs,"——&c.

The borders of the Mississippi, in their natural state, are far from being agreeable to the eye; we see only gloomy forests, close thickets of underwood and reeds, putrescent trunks of trees, and the ragged banks heaped up with the sweepings of the upper country. In lieu of these deformities, we generally find clean, smooth banks, a stream unobstructed by impediments, its encroachments restrained, and every where delightful plantations and dwellings. The coast may be said to begin at Pointe Coupee. From this to La Fourche, two thirds of the banks are perfectly cleared and highly cultivat-

ed : from thence to New Orleans, distance of nearly one hundred miles, the settlements continue without interruption on both sides, and present the appearance of a continued village.

I was enraptured with the magnificence of the scene, as I floated down the majestic river in the month of December 1811. Nothing ever appeared to me more enchanting than the continued succession of plantations laid off with regularity and taste; the various useful and ornamental trees, the fig, peccane, ever green oak, laurels, pine and weeping willow. The delightful groves of orange trees, bending under the weight of their golden fruit, to one, just from the dreary solitudes of the Missouri, or the rude wilds of Upper Louisiana, were objects indescribably pleasing. I could have believed that I was witnessing those paradisiacal scenes of which I have sometimes dreamed; but one or two reflections which intruded themselves, unwelcome and unbidden guests, soon caused me to view the " fair profusion," with other sensations. The earth which bears these ornaments has been moistened by the tears of hundreds who labor to support—

" A haughty lordling's pride :"

in the midst of these rich gifts which seem to invite to enjoyment and delight, there lurk poison, disease, and death! Alas! how much is the poor wanderer deceived, whose thoughts are bent on discovering on this earth, some spot, possessing in a higher degree than any other, the streams of happiness, and of pleasure unalloyed! a nearer approach dispels what the distant prospect had promised, and he is at length taught by experience, that the gifts of heaven are equally dispensed, at least that it is not in this world he is to expect a paradise.

The dwellings on the coast are generally frame, of one story in height, but there are many constructed with tolerable elegance. The sugar houses, on either side, at intervals considerably distant, were easily distinguished, by the vast columns of smoke which they sent up into the air. Within thirty or forty miles of the city there are but few of the *petits habitants*, the lands being engrossed by the wealthy planters: this is continually progressing upwards and the disproportion of the whites to the blacks, of course increasing. Below the place, where the insurrection commenced in 1811, to the city, the distance of thirty miles, there is scarcely one white person to twenty blacks. When the lands on the coast shall be principally occupied by the larger planters, which will be the case at no distant period, it will be found absolutely necessary to station an armed force at intervals, as far up as Pointe Coupee.

The settlements of Fausse riviere, on the old bed of the river, behind Pointe Coupee, is considered one of the wealthiest in the state. In high water, Fausse river, is filled from the Mississippi, and is as wide as that river; after the flood subsides, the water in this place stagnates, and the settlement is rendered unhealthy. The banks are high, and there is greater safety from inundation and the breaking of the levee than on the Mississippi.

I here subjoin two statistical tables, from the valuable work of Mr. Darby, which will complete this general outline of the state of Louisiana.

PARISHES.	S. Miles.	in 1810. Populat.
Plaquemines,	1,500	1,549
Orleans,	1,300	24,552
St. Bernard,	400	1,020
St. Charles,	300	3,291
St. Jean Baptiste,	150	2,990
St. James,	170	3,955
Ascension,	350	2,219
Assumption,	500	2,472
Interior of La Fourche,	2,500	1,995
Iberville,	350	2,679
West Baton Rouge,	850	1,463
Point Coupee,	600	4,539
St. Mary's and St. Martins, Attacapas,	5,100	7,369
St. Landre Opelousas,	7,600	5,048
Natchitoches,	10,600	2,870
Ouachitta,	4,000	1,077
Rapides,	2,300	2,300
Ocachoola,	2,000	1,164
Concordia,	2,100	2,875
Avoyelles,	700	1,109
New Feliciana,	1,050	10,000
East Baton Rouge,	500	
St. Helena,	1,300	
St. Tammany,	2,000	

Table of profits resulting from the employment of fifty workmen on a farm in Louisiana.

STAPLE.	AMOUNT.	PRICE.	NETT VAL.	Annual revenue rom each hand.	ACRES.	No. of acres in the state suited to each staple.
Sugar,	150,000 *lbs.*	$ .08 *per lb.*	$12,000.	$240	150	250,000
Rice,	700 *bls.*	6. *per bbl.*	4,200.	84	100	250,000
Cotton,	60,000 *bls.*	.15 *per lb.*	9,000.	180	250	2,400,000
Indigo,	7,000 *lbs.*	1. *per lb.*	7,000.	140		2,000,000
Tobacco,	60,000 *lbs.*	10. *p. cwt.*	5,375.12½	107		1,500,000

NOTE.—The whole extent of the state of Louisiana, after deducting one fifth for the swamps, rivers, lakes, pine barrens and other irreclaimable tracts, extends over 23,480,320 acres. The one tenth of that quantity may be assumed for cotton. Indigo, which demands a richer soil, but similar climate, is allowed another tenth. Tobacco can be raised in all parts of the state, but the soil best suited for it is nearly the same as that required for sugar cane.

CHAP. II.

The Levees, or embankments of the Mississippi.

IT will perhaps, be said, that, in some respects, I have represented this country in too favorable a light; that I have endeavored to represent the difficulties, which oppose themselves to its improvement, as less considerable than they really are. Certainly those difficulties are many and great, and when contemplated without reflecting on what is in the power of a man to effect, they appear insurmountable: but when we examine what he has done in other parts of the world, it must be acknowledged that few impossibilities present themselves in the improvement of this country. Time, and a more numerous population, are doubtless requisite, but the advantages which offer themselves, will render that improvement, sooner or later, not the less certain. The soil of Louisiana, on the borders of the great river, does not yield in point of fertility to any in the world; its climate, during nine months of the year, is delightful, and bad the remainder, from the present irreclaimed state of a great portion of its surface: it has great advantages in possessing the delta of the great river, which will become the depository of vast riches, while its produce constitutes staples of greater value than that of almost any other of the United States. These considerations

will continue to raise the lands of Louisiana to their highest price, sooner than in other sections of the union, where the productions are nearly the same, and not of so great a value in commerce, and where the population will not so soon resort to the various arts of improving, which have been adopted in the populous countries of Europe. These arts will soon have to be resorted to by Louisiana, in order to secure, or extend its valuable cultures. Many years, it is true, in spite of the greatest industry, perseverance and ingenuity, must still pass away before we can become sufficiently acquainted with the country, and learn the best and most effectual modes of reducing it to subjection; this can only be the result of long experience and observation. The observations of experience must be moulded into a science; the inventions and arts of the old world, for similar purposes, must be put in requisition, and new ones formed, adapted to the local peculiarities. But it is the gift of man, and the commandment of his Creator, to subdue and govern the earth; and when we have seen him, not only place it under subjection, but even raise for himself a dominion out of the elements of storms, where shall we set bounds to his labors and ingenuity?

The most considerable work of art, yet constructed for the purpose of rendering this country habitable, is the embarkment of the river, usually called the levee. We should be much deceived, if we were to form an idea of this work from the dykes of Holland, or the embankments of the Nile. The levee is commonly constructed in the following manner, and is indeed but a trifling work, considering the importance of its object:—At a distance, seldom exceeding thirty or forty yards from the natural bank,

a mound of earth is raised about five feet high, and twelve at the base, with a sufficient width at the top for a foot path; in general, resembling very much the embankments on the Delaware, erected to keep out the tide from the marshes on its borders. The size varies considerably; in some places, particularly on the points, where the land is higher, and against which the current of the river does not strike with violence, the levees are very trifling; but in bends, where the current acts with greater force, it is found necessary to oppose a more considerable mound; on some of the bends, where the force of the current is very great, the embankment is a work of considerable consequence. The levee of M'Carty's, a few miles above New-Orleans, is almost fifteen feet high, by thirty at the base, and six feet at the top; this is the most considerable on the river, excepting that immediately in front of the city. As there is no stone to be had, the only material is a soft clay, with cypress staves placed on the outside, that is, next the river, and the whole covered with earth and sodded. On the inside a ditch is made, for the purpose of receiving and carrying off the water, which sweeps through the embankment in the season of the floods. The road lies between the ditch and fences, and is crossed at intervals of half a mile, by drains from the ditch just mentioned, and covered like the sewers of a city; these drains pass through the fields, and carry the water to the swamps. A vast quantity of water is continually oozing through the porous embankments, and in many places gushes through holes made by crawfish, which often increase so rapidly as to cause a breech in the levee. It requires several years for the levee to become solid and firm; previous to this, it is liable to be in-

jured by rains. The embankment runs in a very irregular line; in many places it changes its direction every twenty or thirty yards, for its zigzag course is not only suited to the sinuosities of the river, but also to its smaller indentations, for being too slight a work to compel the river to hold a regular course, it is obliged to yield to its caprices: and as the river encroaches or recedes, another levee is constructed nea er the river or behind the first; from which circumstance, there are in many places what are called double levees.

A person standing inside of the levee, during the flood, seems to be considerably below the surface of the water, or as some have expressed it, "the water appears to roll over his head." There is, however, something of a deception in this; for here are in few places more than two or three feet of water against the levee, as the ground between it and the river is much higher than on the inside; this may be accounted for, from the quantity of sediment there deposited, and the circumstance of the road having been worn down by constant use.

Beside the mode of making the levee, of which we have spoken, there are others, but which are scarcely necessary to be described; the diversity arises from the different nature of the grounds, and the degree of resistance to be opposed to the current. What is considered a good levee, may in most places be made for five hundred to a thousand dollars per mile; but in many it would cost several thousands. Every individual is required to keep up the levee in front of his own land, and before the season of high water it is inspected by commissioners appointed for the purpose, in each parish, and if found insufficient it is made as his expense. But this is by no means

adequate to ensure safety; for during the continuance of the floods, the levees demand the most vigilant attention; they must be continually watched, and all hands are often drawn from the fields to guard them for whole days and nights. The action of the current discovers defective parts, before unobserved; here earth must be added and slabs placed, to prevent it from crumbling in; and often, after the rains, which prevail at this season, it becomes spongy and loose in its texture, and the holes made by crawfish at this time are particularly to be dreaded. It not unfrequently happens, that from the want of strength, or from the negligence of some individual, both he and his neighbours are ruined.

It has often been a matter of surprise to me that works upon which so much depend, should be constructed in a manner so rude and trifling. A few moments are sufficient to destroy the labor and industry of twenty years. It was remarked that the steam boat in high water, under way, might with ease pass over the levee! I was never more struck with the infant state of improvements in this country, and the want of public spirit, than in viewing the work upon which the Louisianian depends for the security of his all: a prodigious volume of water rolling over his head, prevented only by a slight mound of earth from overwhelming him and all he possesses. But he does not sleep soundly. In 1811,* in the season of high water, for six weeks the coast presented a scene of continual anxiety and apprehension; the hands withdrawn from the fields, and kept

* This was still more the case in the year 1813, the water rose higher than in 1811, by six or eight inches, and had the planters not been somewhat prepared by the former season, they must have been totally destroyed.

watching day and night, and adding to their breast-work as the river rose. If the expense, labour, loss of time, and the destruction of property, were estimated and formed into a general fund, it would have been sufficient to have erected a work capable of withstanding the highest flood, and to have rendered them perfectly secure for the future. If in the season of high water the least storm of wind were to arise, there are scarcely any of the present levees which would not give way and the whole country be laid under water. But until the season comes the danger is not feared, and nothing is done until it is too late; those who escape resolve to be prepared for the next year, but this is soon forgotten. Last year (1812) the water rose much less than in ordinary years, and scarcely passed over the banks, yet at this time, a high wind, which continued more than a day, made several breaches in the levee, doing much injury to the plantations. Had this storm occurred at the same season the year before, the whole country would have been placed under water. A gentleman informed me that he witnessed a storm that season, but which lasted only fifteen minutes; yet the effects which it threatened seemed to produce an universal panic; man, woman, and child, involuntarily ran to the levee as it were to support it with their hands.

The Mississippi in its natural state, at least for one hundred and fifty miles above New Orleans, overflows its banks, *communibus annis*, from two to three feet, and the descent to the swamps is very rapid, perhaps not less than four feet a mile. Even in this state, it must flow over its banks with great velocity, but the artificial embankments, by enclosing its waters, cause them to rise from two to three feet

higher. The natural fall of the river itself, scarcely exceeds one foot per mile: we may now easily conceive the velocity of a sheet of water whose current is thus suddenly increased to five or six feet per mile. It rushes from the river with indescribable impetuosity, with the noise like the roaring of a cataract, boiling, and foaming, and tearing every thing before it. To one who has not seen this country it is almost impossible to convey any idea of the terrors excited by a *crevasse* or breaking of the levee. Like the breaking out of fire in a town, where no one knows when his own dwelling may be assailed, it excites universal consternation; every employment is abandoned for miles above and below, and all hasten to the spot, where every exertion is made day and night to stop the breach, which is sometimes successful, but more frequently, the hostile element is suffered to take its course. The consequences are, the destruction of the crop, the buildings, and sometimes the land itself is much injured where the current rushes over, carrying away the soil, or leaving numerous logs and trees drawn into the vortex as they floated down the river; these must be destroyed before the land can again be cultivated. The effects of a breach of the levee are even more desolating than those of fire.

There are various modes of stopping a crevasse, the most common is the following: they begin on each side of the crevasse, to drive double rows of piles carefully yielding to the current so as to meet less resistance, until they unite, and thus form a semicircle like a fish basket; in the next place the piles are interwoven with small branches, or slabs placed lengthwise between them, branches of trees are then placed behind the piles, and some heavier

materials, logs, &c. against them: if they can succeed this far, earth is then thrown upon the whole, and thus a new levee formed. As a preventive, where the levee appears to be about giving away, coffer dams are erected.

Though not ambitious of the reputation of a projector, I cannot refrain from expressing the following notions on the mode which ought to be pursued. It strikes me that this, as is the case with every great public work in the United States, should be resigned to a company organized for the purpose, who might draw a benefit from the undertaking, and at the same time be responsible to the individual for the injury which he sustains. When we see the enormous expense in constructing turnpikes for the purpose of facilitating the transportation of goods and for travelling, it would be no great exertion of public spirit, for people to go to the same expense in securing not only those objects, but *their all*. Two hundred thousand dollars, the value of one plantation, would make the levee twenty feet wide at the base, and ten feet at the top from New Orleans, on the east side, to Baton Rouge; the expenses then would not be greater than in keeping a turnpike road in repair. The travelling up and down the coast is as great as on any of our turnpikes, and the tolls would yield as much. There is no planter on the coast who would not pay five dollars per acre front per annum, to be exempt from the labour of keeping up his levee, and for the security he would gain from one made on such a scale. It is a fact, there is not a planter on the Mississippi, whose plantation might not be ruined in half an hour, and perhaps less time by some villain, wicked enough to do it: he would only have to make a breach in the

levee, which the current would soon widen sufficiently for his purpose. Centinels during the highest stage of water, are continually walking on the levees, as well to prevent such attempts, as to watch any inroads of the water.

It would be adviseable to leave at intervals, openings in the levee, properly secured on each side, like the sluices of the saw mills, in order to let off the water of the river. An immense quantity escapes through the present levees. In proportion as the levees extend upwards, and those below become properly secured, so as to prevent much of the water from escaping, they must be raised. A vast body of water at the present time passes off in those places, where there are no embankments; if this were kept in, the levees would every where require to be several feet higher. Artificial drains at proper distances might in a great measure obviate this difficulty. But not having leisure for these speculations, I leave them to others, who are otherwise interested, than as general well-wishers for the prosperity of the country.

[*The following is a letter addressed to the editor of the* Weekly Register, *while it was supposed that New Orleans was entirely ruined by the inundation of last spring.*]

SIR,

An extract has appeared in your paper, from a volume which I published some years ago, entitled,

"*Views of Louisiana.*" The situation of that interesting city, New-Orleans, the future emporium of the west, will excuse me for publishing, through your paper, some further particulars respecting the embankments of the Mississippi. I have seen in the gazettes, and have heard in conversation, very considerable exaggerations, both of the injury sustained by that city, and of the disadvantages to which the people inhabiting the banks of the Mississippi must always be subject. The temporary sufferings of the inhabitants of New Orleans, and its vicinity, will unquestionably be very great. The poorer class who inhabit the back streets, as well as those who reside in the suburbs, will suffer beyond any thing we can well conceive. The beautiful gardens, on the road to the bayou St. John, will be seriously injured, and hundreds of honest industrious people, who raise vegetables for the market, will be ruined. These misfortunes, however, the city of New Orleans might in a few years repair, but she cannot so easily change the character which she will acquire abroad, of being unavoidably subject to the recurrence of so dreadful a calamity. It is this which will endanger her prosperity, much more than the floods of the river: and it is with a view of encountering the public opinion, on this subject, that I take the liberty of coming forward to suggest a few ideas, the result of my observations while in that country.

I will premise, however, that with respect to any unusual sickness being caused by the inundation, I do not think there is much to apprehend; the sickly season does not commence until the Mississippi has retired within its banks, and long before this time, the water which found its way through the crevasse, will sink, evaporate, or flow to the swamps: a few

days being sufficient for this purpose. The principal cause of unhealthiness in Louisiana, is the quantity of slime left on the banks of the river, the stagnant waters between the double levees, and the miasma of the swamps; therefore, to assign such important effects to so slight a cause, as that of a few hundred acres of land, being covered for a time with fresh water, might almost appear absurd. I do not pretend that there is nothing to apprehend; great care must be taken when the river begins to subside, that the water be drained off before it can stagnate, and that the animal and vegetable exuviæ left around the city, be destroyed before the action of the sun can render it putrid. All this is of so little consequence, compared to the permanent causes of decease in Louisiana, that I do not apprehend from it any thing extraordinary. There is also a favourable circumstance, which will tend to lessen the danger; it is observed as one of those providential dispensations which alleviate human calamities, that the moment the Mississippi begins to subside, there are daily showers, which wash the slime from the banks, freshen the air, and preserve the waters left by the river in a state of purity, until the greater part is evaporated or drained: and, as I have already observed, the city and its environs will be entirely dry, before the existence of that state of the atmosphere, in which a general tendency to bilious fevers may be said to prevail. Thus much, as to the extent of the present and probable suffering to which the city of New Orleans has been unhappily exposed.

As to any permanent injury, that must resolve itself into the simple question, whether the artificial banks of the Mississippi can be so secured as to prevent a recurrence of the calamity in future? Of this

I never had the least doubt. It has only been a matter of astonishment to me, that so little should have been done towards an object so important; I could only account for it from that total want of public spirit which is observed in all colonies; it was not until after we had gained our independence, that we bethought ourselves of building noble bridges, of making vast turnpike roads, of digging canals and effecting other national works; and surely it is not likely that such a government as that of Spain, would encourage public spirit in her colonies! The closing scene of the last war, in which Louisiana covered herself with glory, has produced a total change in the character of the people, who begin to entertain a just pride of country, and public spirit will soon manifest itself in united efforts, for their safety and prosperity. That narrow feeling, which cares nothing for the suffering of others, provided self is safe, will soon, I trust, disappear forever. The misfortune of New Orleans will result in a benefit to her and to the state. An appeal to the senses, and to our dearest interests, is better attended to, than an appeal to the understanding. The eyes of the inhabitants, will soon be opened, and they will resolve to escape from that habitual security, fraught with so much evil, in which they have heretofore reposed; something will now be done in earnest, which will not only render the banks of the river safe against the floods, but even preserve the state from the visitations of disease.

The first step, would be to open the larger natural sluices, such as the Atchafalaya, which is now almost closed up, and which has been the principal cause of the great rise in the waters for some years past; the next, will be to make a sufficient number

of artificial sluices, so as to afford outlets at short intervals; there will then be less occasion for augmenting the embankments, but this should, nevertheless, be attended to, as the chief dependence for security. Here I must repeat, that nothing is more practicable than the erection of complete and safe embankments, these works are yet in their rudest state here, and they afford ample proof of the facility with which those of sufficient strength may be accomplished. There is no need of immense dykes or mounds like those of Holland; even with the slender levees which at present exist, Louisiana can never suffer so much as that country has experienced, on several occasions, within a few years past. We hear of two hundred villages being overflowed, and thousands perishing; this is an extent of calamity that can never happen on the Mississippi, which although, one of the mightiest and most magnificent rivers in the world, is one of the most gentle and easily restrained. Like the elephant, it may be guided by a thread. The annual flood of the river, bears no resemblance to the sudden, violent and irregular swellings of the Rhine or the Elb; it rises slowly and gradually, and so regularly, that in Lower Louisiana it seldom varies more than a few inches. There is no danger from those sudden and extraordinary freshes, which unexpectedly pass over the banks with irresistible violence. This mighty river can be more easily restrained within its banks, than some petty streams which at certain seasons, scarcely contain a sufficiency of water to navigate a canoe. In most places, the present levees, though slight, will answer all the purposes required. In order to explain, it will be necessary to give some little description of the river. It is remarkable for its nu-

merous sinuosities; every few miles it changes its course; forming numerous points and bends: it may be easily imagined, that the force of the current, in the points and in the bends, is very different. The whole force of the current usually falls in the middle of the bend, washes the bank steep, and often undermining it, causes considerable portions of the earth to tumble in, particularly above Natchez; for as we approach the lower parts of the river, and for some distance above New Orleans, it is enclosed by a very stiff and tenacious clay, which resists in a great measure the action of the water. It is in those bends that the bursting of the levee always take place; this I think can be remedied by the simple precaution of having double levees: the second at the distance of twenty or thirty yards from the first. Instead of this, we see in many places, the levee on the very brink of the river, and continually crumbling into the water. The moment the current approaches the first levee, there ought to be another thrown up in the rear. At present, for miles along the river, there is nothing but this single slender mound, to resist the whole force of the current of this vast river; a mound, which would not be considered sufficient to keep the tide out of the salt marshes of the Atlantic rivers. Round the points there is little or no current, and besides a batture or sand bar usually stretches out from it, protecting it from undermining; here the levee does not require to be very strong; I know many places, where the planter is perfectly secure with a levee of two or three feet high, and not more than five or six feet at the base. In stating these particulars, I only mean to shew, that, comparatively, nothing has yet been done to secure the banks of the river, and that if this

work was properly undertaken, it could, beyond all possible doubt, be carried into complete execution; and that the inhabitants of this river, would be as safe from inundation as those of any other in the United States: and that, with respect to New Orleans, a calamity like the present may never occur again.

I have examined the ground upon which the city of New Orleans is built, with some attention; it is built round the bend for the sake of enjoying the advantage of the eddy and point, as a harbour, and on account of the greater vicinity to the bayou St. John, the harbour for vessels sailing in the lakes. The ground is, however, by no means the best; the land in the point, just above it, being higher and more safe; the land at that place is probably at this moment, for the greater part, dry; the water of the crevasse, at the bend, six miles above the city, rushes directly across towards that on which the city stands, leaving the point, on which there are some very valuable plantations, as it were, cut off from the main land. The place at which the water has broken through, has always been considered the most difficult to protect on the whole river; formerly, it used to break here every year—but it was thought for some years past, to have been made perfectly secure; and from all accounts, it appears that much of what has happened, is to be attributed to indolent security and blameable negligence. The city was formerly surrounded by ramparts, so that no inundation could affect it; but after the change of government, they were levelled, and a sufficient safeguard was not provided at M'Carthy's, the consequence of which that unhappy city now feels.

Should any thing I have here stated, tend to counteract the prevailing opinion of a permanent and irreparable injury to the city of New Orleans; an opinion which might materially affect her future prosperity, I shall think myself peculiarly fortunate. The present site is, in many respects, an admirable one; except that of Baton Rouge, which is too high up the river, there is none to be compared with it on the lower Mississippi; it is open on one side to the trade of the lakes, and the fine country on their borders, of West Florida and Mississippi territory, of the Mobile and its numerous waters, of Pensacola, &c. and on the other, it is the great depot of the western world. An immense city must rise on this spot, in spite of these partial calamities, for I am firmly of opinion, that although the present suffering will be immense, that it will ultimately prove a general benefit. It would be well worthy of our fellow citizens throughout the United States, to take this opportunity of manifesting their generosity, by contributing some assistance to the poor and distressed inhabitants of a sister city, which has been visited by a deluge almost as dreadful in its effects, as a general conflagration.

H. M. BRACKENRIDGE.

Baltimore, June 19, 1816.

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